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*White Wings : A Yachting Romance.*

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CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A PARABLE.



**N**OW we had not been five minutes within the walls of Castle Osprey when great shouts of laughter were heard in the direction of the library ; and presently the Laird came quickly into the room where the two women were standing at the open window. He was flourishing a newspaper in his hand ; delight, sarcasm, and desperate humour shone in his face. He would not notice that Queen Titania looked very much inclined to cry, as she gazed out on the forlorn remains of

what had once been a rose-garden ; he would pay no heed to Mary Avon's wan cheek and pensive eyes.

"Just listen to this, ma'am, just listen to this," he called out briskly ;

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and all the atmosphere of the room seemed to wake up into cheerfulness and life. "Have I not told ye often about that extraordinary body, Johnnie Guthrie? Now just listen!"

It appeared that the Laird, without even bestowing a glance on the pile of letters lying waiting for him, had at once dived into the mass of newspapers, and had succeeded in fishing out the report of the last meeting of the Strathgovan Police Commissioners. With a solemnity that scarcely veiled his suppressed mirth, he said—

"Just listen, ma'am: 'The fortnightly meeting of the Strathgovan Police Commissioners was held on Monday, Provost McKendrick in the chair. Mr. Robert Johnstone said he had much pleasure in congratulating the chairman and the other gentlemen assembled on the signal and able manner in which the fire brigade had done their duty on the previous Saturday at the great conflagration in Coulter-side buildings; and he referred especially to the immense assistance given by the new fire-engine recently purchased by the Commissioners. (Hear! hear!) He could assure the meeting that but for the zealous and patriotic ardour of the brigade—aided, no doubt, by the efficient working of the steam engine—a most valuable property would have been devoted *holus-bolus* to the flames.'"

The Laird frowned at this phrase.

"Does the crayture think he is talking Latin?" he asked, apparently of himself.

However, he continued his reading of the report—

"'Provost McKendrick, replying to these observations, observed that it was certainly a matter for congratulation that the fire brigade should have proved their efficiency in so distinct a manner, considering the outlay that had been incurred; and that now the inhabitants of the Burgh would perceive the necessity of having more plugs. So far all the money had been well spent. Mr. J. Guthrie'"—but here the Laird could not contain his laughter any longer.

"That's Johnnie, ma'am," he cried, in explanation, "that's the Johnnie Guthrie I was telling ye about—the poor, yaumering, pernickity, querulous crayture! 'Mr. J. Guthrie begged to say he could not join in these general felicitations. They were making a great deal of noise about nothing. The fire was no fire at all; a servant-girl could have put it out with a pail. He had come from Glasgow by the eleven-o'clock 'bus, and there was then not a trace of a fire to be seen. The real damage done to the property was not done by the fire, but by the dirty water drawn by the fire brigade from the Coulter burn, which dirty water had entirely destroyed Mrs. MacInnes' best bedroom furniture.'"

The Laird flourished the newspaper, and laughed aloud in his joy; the mere reading of the extract had so thoroughly discomfited his enemy.

"Did ye ever hear the like o' that body?" he cried. "A snarlin', quarlin', gruntin', growlin', fashious crayture! He thinks there could

not be any fire, just because he was not in time to see it. Oh, Johnnie, Johnnie, I'm just fair ashamed o' ye."

But at this point the Laird seemed to become aware that he had given way too much to his love of pure and pithy English. He immediately said, in a more formal manner—

"I am glad to perceive, ma'am, that the meeting paid no heed to these strictures, but went on to consider whether the insurance companies should not share the expense of maintaining the fire brigade. That was most proper—most judicious. I'm thinking that after dinner I could not do better than express my views upon that subject, in a letter addressed to the Provost. It would be in time to be read at the monthly sederunt."

"Come along, then, Mary, and let us get through our letters," said his hostess, turning away with a sigh from the dilapidated rose-garden.

As she passed the piano, she opened it.

"How strange it will sound!" she said.

She played a few bars of Mary Avon's favourite song; somehow the chords seemed singularly rich and full and beautiful after our long listening to the monotonous rush of the sea. Then she put her hand within the girl's arm and gently led her away, and said to her as they passed through the hall

"Oh, little did my mither think  
When first she cradled me"

that ever I should have come back to such a picture of desolation. But we must put a brave face on it. If the autumn kills the garden, it glorifies the hills. You will want all your colour-tubes when we show you Loch Hourn."

"That was the place the Doctor was anxious to visit," said the Laird, who was immediately behind them. "Ay. Oh, yes, we will show Miss Mary Loch Hourn; she will get some material for sketches there, depend on't. Just the finest loch in the whole of the Highlands. When I can get Tom Galbraith first of all persuaded to see Bunessan—"

But we heard no more about Tom Galbraith. Queen Titania had uttered a slight exclamation as she glanced over the addresses of the letters directed to her.

"From Angus!" she said, as she hurriedly opened one of the envelopes, and ran her eye over the contents.

Then her face grew grave, and inadvertently she turned to the Laird.

"In three days," she said, "he was to start for Italy."

She looked at the date.

"He must have left London already!" said she, and then she examined the letter further. "And he does not say where he is going."

The Laird looked grave too—for a second. But he was an excellent actor. He began whistling the air that his hostess had been playing. He turned over his letters and papers carelessly. At length, he said, with an air of fine indifference—

"The grand thing of being away at sea is to teach ye the comparatively trifling importance of anything that can happen on land."

He tossed the unopened letters about, only regarding the addresses.

"What care I what the people may have been saying about me in my absence?—the real thing is that we got food to eat and were not swept into Corrievreckan. Come, Miss Mary, I will just ask ye to go for a stroll through the garden wi' me, until dinner-time; our good friends will not ask us to dress on an evening like this, just before we have got everything on shore. Twenty-five meemutes, ma'am? Very well. If anybody has been abusing me in my absence, we'll listen to the poor fellow after dinner, when we can get the laugh made general, and so make some good out of him; but just now we'll have the quiet of the sunset to ourselves. Dear, dear me! we used to have the sunset after dinner when we were away up about Canna and Uist."

Mary Avon seemed to hesitate.

"What! not a single letter for ye? That shows very bad taste on the part of the young men about England. But I never thought much o' them. From what I hear, they are mostly given over to riding horses, and shooting pheasants, and what not. But never mind. I want ye to come out for a stroll wi' me, my lass: ye'll see some fine colour about the Morven hills presently, or I'm mistaken."

"Very well, sir," said she, obediently; and together they went out into the garden.

Now it was not until some minutes after the dinner-gong had sounded that we again saw these two, and then there was nothing in the manner of either of them to suggest to any one that any thing had happened. It was not until many days afterwards that we obtained, bit by bit, an account of what had occurred, and even then it was but a stammering, and disjointed, and shy account. However, such as it was, it had better appear here, if only to keep the narrative straight.

The Laird, walking up and down the gravel path with his companion, said that he did not so much regret the disappearance of the roses, for there were plenty of other flowers to take their place. Then he thought he and she might go and sit on a seat which was placed under a drooping ash in the centre of the lawn, for from this point they commanded a fine view of the western seas and hills. They had just sat down there when he said—

"My girl, I am going to take the privilege of an old man, and speak frankly to ye. I have been watching ye, as it were—and your mind is not at ease."

Miss Avon hastily assured him that it was quite, and begged to draw his attention to the yacht in the bay, where the men were just lowering the ensign, at sunset.

The Laird returned to the subject; entreated her not to take it ill that he should interfere; and then reminded her of a certain night on Loch Leven, and of a promise he had then made her. Would he be ful-

filling that solemn undertaking if he did not, at some risk of vexing her, and of being considered a prying, foolish person, endeavour to help her if she was in trouble ?

Miss Avon said how grateful she was to him for all his kindness to her; and how his promise had already been amply fulfilled. She was not in trouble. She hoped no one thought that. Everything that had happened was for the best. And here—as was afterwards admitted—she burst into a fit of crying, and was very much mortified, and ashamed of herself.

But at this point the Laird would appear to have taken matters into his own hand. First of all he began to speak of his nephew—of his bright good nature, and so forth—of his professed esteem for her—of certain possibilities that he, the Laird, had been dreaming about with the fond fancy of an old man. And rather timidly he asked her—if it were true that she thought everything had happened for the best—whether, after all, his nephew Howard might not speak to her? It had been the dream of his old age to see these two together at Denny-mains, or on board that steam yacht he would buy for them on the Clyde. Was that not possible?

Here, at least, the girl was honest and earnest enough—even anxiously earnest. She assured him that that was quite impossible. It was hopeless. The Laird remained silent for some minutes, holding her hand.

"Then," said he, rather sadly, but with an affectation of grave humour, "I am going to tell you a story. It is about a young lass, who was very proud, and who kept her thoughts very much to herself, and would not give her friends a chance of helping her. And she was very fond of a—a young Prince we will call him—who wanted to go away to the wars, and make a great name for himself. No one was prouder of the Prince than the girl, mind ye, and she encouraged him in everything, and they were great friends, and she was to give him all her diamonds, and pearls, and necklaces—she would throw them into his treasury, like a Roman matron—just that he might go away and conquer, and come back and marry her. But lo, and behold! one night all her jewels and bracelets were stolen! Then what does she do? Would ye believe it? She goes and quarrels with that young Prince, and tells him to go away and fight his battles for himself, and never to come back and see her any more—just as if any one could fight a battle wi' a sore heart. Oh, she was a wicked, wicked lass, to be so proud as that, when she had many friends that would willingly have helped her. . . . Sit down, my girl, sit down, my girl, never mind the dinner; they can wait for us. . . . Well, ye see, the story goes on that there was an old man—a foolish old man—they used to laugh at him, because of his fine fishing tackle, and the very few fish he caught wi' the tackle—and this doited old body was always intermeddling in other people's business. And what do you think he does but go and say to the young lass: 'Ha, have I found ye

out? Is it left for an old man like me—and me a bachelor, too, who should know but little of the quips and cranks of a young lass's ways—is it left for an old man like me to find out that fine secret o' yours?" She could not say a word. She was dumfounded. She had not the face to deny it: he *had* found out what that wicked girl, with all her pride, and her martyrdom, and her sprained ankles, had been about. And what do you think he did then? Why, as sure as sure can be, he had got all the young lass's property in his pocket; and before she could say Jack Robinson, he tells her that he is going to send straight off for the Prince —this very night—a telegram to London——"

The girl had been trembling, and struggling with the hand that held hers. At last she sprang to her feet, with a cry of entreaty.

"Oh, no, no, no, sir! You will not do that! You will not degrade me!"

And then—this is her own account, mind—the Laird rose too, and still held her by the hand, and spoke sternly to her.

"Degrade you?" said he. "Foolish lass! Come in to your dinner."

When these two did come in to dinner—nearly a quarter of an hour late—their hostess looked anxiously from one to the other. But what could she perceive? Mary Avon was somewhat pale, and she was silent: but that had been her way of late. As for the Laird, he came in whistling the tune of the Queen's Maries, which was a strange grace before meat, and he looked airily around him at the walls.

"I would just like to know," said he lightly, "whether there is a single house in all Scotland where ye will not find an engraving of one or other of Mr. Thomas Faed's pictures in some one of the rooms?"

And he preserved this careless and indifferent demeanour during dinner. After dinner he strolled into the library. He would venture upon a small cigar. His sole companion was the person whose humble duty in this household is to look after financial matters, so that other folks may enjoy themselves in idleness.

The Laird lay back in an easy-chair, stretched out his legs, lit his cigar, and held it at arms' length, as if it were something that ought to be looked at at a distance.

"You had something to do with the purchase of Miss Mary's American stock, eh?" said he, pretending to be concerned about the end of the cigar.

"Yes."

"What was it?"

"Funded Five per Cent."

"What would be about the value of it now?"

"Just now? Oh, perhaps 106, or 107."

"No, no, no. I mean, if the bonds that that ill-faured scoundrel carried away with him were to be sold the now, what money, what English money, would they fetch?"

But this required some calculation,

"Probably about 7,300*l.*"

"I was asking," said the Laird, "because I was wondering whether there was any chance of tracing them."

"Not the least. They are like bank-notes—more useful indeed, to a swindler than even bank-notes."

"Ay, is that so," said the Laird; and he seemed to be so charmed with his whistling of the air of the Queen's Maries that he returned to that performance. Oddly enough, however, he never ventured beyond the first line: perhaps he was afraid of missing the tune.

"Seven thousand three hundred," said he, meditatively. "Man, that's a strong cigar—little, and black, and strong. Seven thousand three hundred. Girls are strange craytires. I remember what that young doctor was saying once about weemen being better able to bear pain than men, and not so much afraid of it either—"

And here the Queen's Maries came in again.

"It would be a strange thing," said the Laird, with a sort of rueful laugh, "if I were to have a steam-yacht all to myself, and cruise about in search of company, eh? No, no; that will not do. My neighbours in Strathgovan will never say that I deserted them, just when great improvements and serious work have to be looked forward to. I will not have it said that I ran away, just to pleasure myself. Howard, my lad, I doubt but ye'll have to whistle for that steam-yacht."

The Laird rose.

"I think I will smoke in the garden now: it is a fine evening."

He turned at the door, and seemed suddenly to perceive a pair of stag's horns over the chimney-piece.

"That's a grand set o' horns," said he; and then he added carelessly, "What bank did ye say they American bonds were in?"

"The London and Westminster."

"They're just a noble pair o' horns," said he emphatically. "I wonder ye do not take them with ye to London." And then he left.

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#### CHAPTER XXXIX.

##### A RELEASE.

WE had a long spell ashore at this time, for we were meditating a protracted voyage, and everything had to be left ship-shape behind us. The Laird was busy from morning till night; but it would appear that all his attention was not wholly given to the affairs of Strathgovan. Occasionally he surprised his hostess by questions which had not the least reference to asphalte pavements or gymnasium chains. He kept his own counsel, nevertheless.

By-and-by his mysterious silence so piqued and provoked her that she seized a favourable opportunity for asking him, point-blank, whether

he had not spoken to Mary Avon. They were in the garden at the time, he seated on an iron seat, with a bundle of papers beside him ; she standing on the gravel-path with some freshly-cut flowers in her hand. There was a little colour in her face, for she feared that the question might be deemed impertinent ; yet, after all, it was no idle curiosity that prompted her to ask it. Was she not as much interested in the girl's happiness as any one could be ?

" I have," said he, looking up at her calmly.

Well, she knew that. Was this all the answer she was to get ?

" I beg your pardon, ma'am," said he, after a second, " if I seem to be making a mystery where there is no mystery. I hate all foolishness like that. I do not myself believe there is anything of the kind ; but I will just ask ye to wait for a day or two before speaking to the lass herself. After that, I will leave it all in your hands. I trust ye will consider that I have done my part."

" Oh, I am sure of that, sir," said she : though how could she be sure ?

" There is not much I would not do for that lass," said he, somewhat absently. " She has a wonderful way of getting a grip of one's heart, as it were. And if I could have wished that things had turned out otherwise—"

The Laird did not finish the sentence. He seemed to rouse himself.

" Toots ! toots !" said he, frowning. " When we are become men, we have to put away childish things. What is the use of crying for the moon ? There, ma'am, is something serious and practical to consider—something better worth considering than childish dreams and fancies."

And then, with much lucidity and with a most dispassionate parade of arguments on both sides, he put before her this knotty question : whether it was a fit and proper thing for a body like the Strathgovan Commissioners to own public-house property ? That was the general question. The immediate question was whether the " William Wallace " public-house, situated in the Netherbiggins road, should be re-let or summarily closed ? On the one hand it was contended that the closing of the " William Wallace " would only produce a greater run on the other licensed houses ; on the other hand, it was urged that a body like the Commissioners should set an example and refuse to encourage a mischievous traffic. Now the Laird's own view of the liquor question—which he always put forward modestly, as subject to the opinion of those who had had a wider legislative and administrative experience than himself—was, that the total suppression of the liquor traffic was a chimera ; and that a practical man should turn to see what could be done in the way of stringent police regulations. He was proceeding to expound these points when he suddenly caught sight of the Youth, who had appeared at the gate, with two long fishing-rods over his shoulder. He dropped his voice.

" That just reminds me, ma'am," said he. " I am greatly obliged to

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ye—my nephew equally so—for your great kindness to him. I think it will not be necessary for him to trespass on your forbearance any longer."

"I don't quite understand you."

"I think I will let him go back to his own pursuits now," said the Laird.

"Oh, no," she said. "By all means let him come with us to Stornoway. He has been very good in not grumbling over any inconvenience. You would not send him away just as we are going to start on our longest cruise?"

She could not say anything further at the moment, for the Youth came up the gravel-path, and threw the two huge rods on to the lawn.

"Look there, uncle!" he cried. "I don't care what size of litho you get on the line, I'll bet those rods won't break, any way. Sutherland used to be lamenting over the big fish you lost up in the north: try them with those things!"

Here their hostess passed on and into the house with her flowers. Uncle and nephew were left by themselves.

"Howard, lad," said the elder of the two men, "bring that chair over, and sit opposite me. I do not want my papers to be disturbed. There are one or two matters of business I would like to put before ye."

The Youth did as he was bid. The Laird paused for a second or two; then he began—

"When I asked ye to come to the Highlands," said he, slowly, "I put an alternative before ye, with certain consequences. There were two things, one of which I wanted ye to do. Ye have done neither."

Howard Smith looked somewhat alarmed: his hostess was not there to put a jocular air over that bargain.

"Well, sir," he stammered, "I—I could not do what was impossible. I—I have done my best."

"Nevertheless," said the Laird; in a matter-of-fact way, "neither has been done. I will not say it has been altogether your fault. So far as I have seen, ye have been on very good terms with the young leddy; and—and—yes, paid her what attention was expected of ye; and——"

"Well, you see, uncle," he interposed, eagerly, "What was the use of my proposing to the girl only to be snubbed? Don't I know she cares no more about me than about the man in the moon? Why, anybody could see that. Of course, you know, if you insist on it—if you drive me to it—if you want me to go in and get snubbed—I'll do it. I'll take my chance. But I don't think it's fair. I mean," he added hastily, "I don't think it is necessary."

"I do not wish to drive ye to anything," said the Laird—on any other occasion he might have laughed at the Youth's ingenuousness, but now he had serious business on hand. "I am content to take things as they are. Neither of the objects I had in view has been accomplished; perhaps both were impossible; who can tell what lies in store for any

of us, when we begin to plan and scheme? However, I am not disposed to regard it as your fault. I will impose no fine or punishment, as if we were playing at theatre-acting. I have neither kith nor kin of my own; and it is my wish that, at my death, Denny-mains should go to you."

The Youth's face turned red; yet he did not know how to express his gratitude. It did not quite seem a time for sentiment; the Laird was talking in such a matter-of-fact way.

"Subject to certain conditions," he continued. "First of all, I spoke some time ago of spending a sum of 3,000*l.* on a steam-yacht. Dismiss that from your mind. I cannot afford it; neither will you be able."

The young man stared at this. For although he cared very little about the steam-yacht—having a less liking for the sea than some of us—he was surprised to hear that a sum like 3,000*l.* was even a matter for consideration to a reputedly rich man like his uncle.

"Oh, certainly, sir," said he. "I don't at all want a steam-yacht."

"Very well, we will now proceed."

The Laird took up one of the documents beside him, and began to draw certain lines on the back of it.

"Ye will remember," said he, pointing with his pencil, "that where the estate proper of Denny-mains runs out to the Coulter-burn road, there is a piece of land belonging to me, on which are two tenements, yielding together, I should say, about 300*l.* a year. By-and-by, if a road should be cut so—across to the Netherbiggins road—that land will be more valuable; many a one will be wanting to feu that piece then, mark my words. However, let that stand by. In the meantime I have occasion for a sum of ten thousand three hundred pounds."

The Youth looked still more alarmed: had his uncle been speculating?

"—and I have considered it my duty to ask you, as the future proprietor of Denny-mains in all human probability, whether ye would rather have these two tenements sold, with as much of the adjoining land as would make up that sum, or whether ye would have the sum made a charge on the estate generally, and take your chance of that land rising in value? What say ye?"

The Laird had been prepared for all this; but the Youth was not. He looked rather frightened.

"I should be sorry to hear, sir," he stammered, "that—that—you were pressed for money—"

"Pressed for money?" said the Laird severely; "I am not pressed for money. There is not a square yard of Denny-mains with a farthing of mortgage on it. Come, let's hear what ye have to say."

"Then," said the young man, collecting his wits, "my opinion is, that a man should do what he likes with his own."

"That's well said," returned the Laird, much mollified. "And I'm no sure but that if we were to roup\* that land, that quarrelsome body

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\* To roup, to sell by public auction.

Johnny Guthrie might not be trying to buy it; and I would not have him for a neighbour on any consideration. Well, I will write to Todd and Buchanan about it at once."

The Laird rose and began to bundle his papers together. The Youth laid hold of the fishing-rods, and was about to carry them off somewhere, when he was suddenly called back.

"Dear me!" said the Laird, "my memory's going. There was another thing I was going to put before ye, lad. Our good friends here have been very kind in asking ye to remain so long. I'm thinking ye might offer to give up your state-room before they start on this long trip. Is there any business or occupation ye would like to be after in the south?"

The flash of light that leapt to the young man's face!

"Why, uncle!" he exclaimed eagerly, diving his hand into his pocket, "I have twice been asked by old Barnes to go to his place—the best partridge-shooting in Bedfordshire—"

But the Youth recollect ed himself.

"I mean," said he seriously, "Barnes, the swell solicitor, don't you know?—Hughes, Barnes, and Barnes. It would be an uncommonly good thing for me to stand well with them. They are just the making of a young fellow at the bar when they take him up. Old Barnes's son was at Cambridge with me; but he doesn't do anything—an idle fellow—cares for nothing but shooting and billiards. I really ought to cultivate old Barnes."

The Laird eyed him askance.

"Off ye go to your partridge-shooting, and make no more pretence," said he; and then he added, "And look here, my lad, when ye leave this house I hope ye will express in a proper form your thanks for the kindness ye have received. No, no; I do not like the way of you English in that respect. Ye take no notice of anything. Ye receive a man's hospitality for a week, a fortnight, a month; and then ye shake hands with him at the door; and walk out—as if nothing had happened! These may be good manners in England; they are not here."

"I can't make a speech, uncle," said the Youth slyly. "They don't teach us those things at the English public schools."

"Ye gowk," said the Laird severely, "do you think I want ye to make a speech like Norval on the Grampian Hills? I want ye to express in proper language your thankfulness for the attention and kindness that have been bestowed on ye. What are ye afraid of? Have ye not got a mouth? From all that I can hear the English have a wonderful fluency of speech, when there is no occasion for it at all: bletherin' away like twenty steam-engines, and not a grain of wheat to be found when a' the stour is laid."

## CHAPTER XL.

## " WHILE THE RIPPLES FOLD UPON SANDS OF GOLD."

THE days passed, and still the Laird professed to be profoundly busy; and our departure for the north was further and further postponed. The Youth had at first expressed his intention of waiting to see us off; which was very kind on his part, considering how anxious he was to cultivate the acquaintance of that important solicitor. His patience, however, at last gave out; and he begged to be allowed to start on a certain morning. The evening before we walked down to the shore with him, and got pulled out to the yacht, and sate on deck, while he went below to pack such things as had been left in his state-room. "It will be a strange thing," said our gentle Admiral-in-chief, "for us to have a cabin empty. That has never happened to us in the Highlands, all the time we have been here. It will be a sort of ghost's room; we shall not dare to look into it for fear of seeing something to awaken old memories."

She put her hand in her pocket, and drew out some small object. "Look," said she, quite sentimentally.

It was only a bit of pencil: if it had been the skull of Socrates she could not have regarded it with a greater interest. "It is the pencil Angus used to mark our games with. I found it in the saloon the day before yesterday—" and then she added, almost to herself—"I wonder where he is now."

The answer to this question startled us. "In Paris," said the Laird.

But no sooner had he uttered the words than he seemed somewhat embarrassed. "That is, I believe so," he said hastily. "I am not in correspondence with him. I do not know for certain. I have heard—it has been stated to me—that he might perhaps remain until the end of this week in Paris before going on to Naples."

He appeared rather anxious to avoid being further questioned. He began to discourse upon certain poems of Burns, whom he had once or twice somewhat slightingly treated. He was now bent on making ample amends. In especial, he asked whether his hostess did not remember the beautiful verse in "Mary Morison," which describes the lover looking on at the dancing of a number of young people, and conscious only that his own sweetheart is not there?

"Do ye remember it, ma'am?" said he; and he proceeded to repeat it for her—

Yestreen, when to the trembling string,  
The dance gaed through the lighted ha',  
To thee my fancy took its wing,  
I sat, but neither heard nor saw.

Though this was fair, and that was braw,  
And yon the toast of a' the town,  
I sighed and said amang them a',  
"Ye are na Mary Morison."

—Beautiful, beautiful, is it not? And that is an extraordinary business—and as old as the hills too—of one young person waling\* out another as the object of all the hopes of his or her life; and nothing will do but that one. Ye may show them people who are better to look at, richer, cleverer; ye may reason and argue; ye may make plans, and what not: it is all of no use. And people who have grown up, and who forget what they themselves were at twenty or twenty-five, may say what they like about the foolishness of a piece of sentiment; and they may prove to the young folks that this madness will not last, and that they should marry for more substantial reasons; but ye are jist talking to the wind! Madness or not madness, it is human nature; and ye might jist as well try to fight against the tides. I will say this, too," continued the Laird—and as he warmed to his subject, he rose, and began to pace up and down the deck—"if a young man were to come and tell me that he was ready to throw up a love-match for the sake of prudence and worldly advantage, I would say to him: 'Man, ye are a poor crayture. Ye have not got the backbone of a mouse in ye.' I have no respect for a young man who has prudence beyond his years; not one bit. If it is human nature for a man at fifty years to laugh at sentiment and romance, it is human nature for a man at twenty-five to believe in it; and he who does not believe in it then, I say, is a poor crayture. He will never come to anything. He may make money; but he will be a poor stupid ass all his days, just without those experiences that make life a beautiful thing to look back on."

He came and sate down by Mary Avon.

"Perhaps a sad thing, too," said he, as he took her hand in his; "but even that is better than a dull causeway, with an animal trudging along and sorely burdened with the world's wealth. And now, my lass, have ye got everything tight and trim for the grand voyage?"

"She has been at it again, sir," says his hostess, interposing. "She wants to set out for the south to-morrow morning."

"It would be a convenient chance for me," said the girl simply. "Mr. Smith might be good enough to see me as far as Greenock—though, indeed, I don't at all mind travelling by myself. I must stop at Kendal—is that where the junction is?—for I promised the poor old woman who died in Edinburgh that I would call and see some relations of hers who live near Windermere."

"They can wait, surely?" said the Laird, with frowning eyebrows, as if the poor people at Windermere had attempted to do him some deadly injury.

"Oh, there is no hurry for them," said she. "They do not even know I am coming. But this chance of Mr. Smith going by the steamer to-morrow would be convenient."

"Put that fancy out of your head," said he with decision. "Ye are

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\* *Waling*—choosing.

going to no Greenock, and to no Kendal, at the present time. Ye are going away with us to the north, to see such things as ye never saw before in your life. And if ye are anxious to get on with your work, I'll tell ye what I'll do. There's our Provost McKendrick has been many a time telling me of the fine salmon-fishing he got at the west side of Lewis—I think he said at a place called Gometra——"

"Grimersta," is here suggested.

"The very place. Ye shall paint a picture of Grimersta, my lass, on commission for the Provost. I authorise ye: if he will not take it, I will take it myself. Never mind what the place is like—the Provost has no more imagination than a boiled lobster; but he knows when he has good friends, and good fishing, and a good glass of whisky; and, depend on it, he'll be proud to have a picture of the place, on your own terms. I tell ye I authorise ye."

Here the Youth came on deck, saying he was now ready to go ashore.

"Do you know, sir," said his hostess, rising, "what Mary has been trying to get me to believe?—that she is afraid of the equinoctials!"

The Laird laughed aloud.

"That is a good one—that is a good one!" he cried. "I never heard a better story about Homesh."

"I know the gales are very wild here when they begin," said Miss Avon, seriously. "Every one says so."

But the Laird only laughs the more, and is still chuckling to himself as he gets down into the gig: the notion of Mary Avon being afraid of anything—of fifteen dozen of equinoctial gales, for example—was to him simply ludicrous.

But a marked and unusual change came over the Laird's manner when we got back to Castle Osprey. During all the time he had been with us, although he had occasionally to administer rebukes, with more or less of solemnity, he had never once lost his temper. We should have imagined it impossible for anything to have disturbed his serene dignity or demeanour. But now—when he discovered that there was no letter awaiting any one of us—his impatience seemed dangerously akin to vexation and anger. He would have the servants summoned and cross-examined. Then he would not believe them; but must needs search the various rooms for himself. The afternoon post had really brought nothing but a newspaper—addressed to the Laird—and that he testily threw into the waste-paper basket, without opening it. We had never seen him give way like this before.

At dinner, too, his temper was no better. He began to deride the business habits of the English people—which was barely civil. He said that the English feared the Scotch and the Germans just as the Americans feared the Chinese—because the latter were the more indefatigable workers. He declared that if the London men had less Amontillado sherry and cigarettes in their private office-rooms, their business would be conducted with much greater accuracy and despatch. Then another

thought struck him : were the servants prepared to swear that no registered letter had been presented in the afternoon, and taken away again because there was no one in the house to sign the receipt ? Inquiry being made it was found that no such letter had been presented. But, finally, when the turmoil about this wretched thing was at its height, the Laird was pressed to say from which part of the country the missive was expected. From London, he said. It was then pointed out to him that the London letters were usually sent along in the evening—sometimes as late as eight or nine o'clock. He went on with his dinner, grumbling.

Sure enough, before he had finished dinner, a footstep was heard on the gravel outside. The Laird, without any apology, jumped up and went to the window.

"There's the postman," said he, as he resumed his seat. "Ye might give him a shilling, ma'am : it is a long climb up the hill."

It was the postman, no doubt ; and he had brought a letter, but it was not for the Laird. We were all apprehensive of a violent storm when the servant passed on and handed this letter to Mary Avon. But the Laird said nothing. Miss Avon, like a properly-conducted school-girl, put the letter in her pocket.

There was no storm. On the contrary, the Laird got quite cheerful. When his hostess hoped that no serious inconvenience would result from the non-arrival of the letter, he said, "Not the least!" He began and told us the story of the old lady who endeavoured to engage the practical Homesh—while he was collecting tickets—in a disquisition on the beauties of Highland scenery, and who was abruptly bidden to "mind her own pussness ;" we had heard the story not more than thirty-eight times, perhaps, from various natives of Scotland.

But the letter about which the Laird had been anxious had—as some of us suspected—actually arrived, and was then in Mary Avon's pocket. After dinner the two women went into the drawing-room. Miss Avon sat down to the piano, and began to play, idly enough, the air called *Heimweh*. Of what home was she thinking, then—this waif and stray among the winds of the world ?

Tea was brought in. At last the curiosity of the elder woman could no longer be restrained.

"Mary," said she, "are you not going to read that letter ?"

"Dear me ! " said the girl, plunging into her pocket. "I had forgotten I had a letter to read."

She took it out and opened it, and began to read. Her face looked puzzled at first, then alarmed. She turned to her friend.

"What is it ? What can it mean ? " she said, in blank dismay ; and the trembling fingers handed her the letter.

Her friend had less difficulty in understanding ; although, to be sure, before she had finished this perfectly plain and matter-of-fact communication, there were tears in her eyes. It was merely a letter from the manager of a bank in London, begging to inform Miss Avon that he

had just received, through Messrs. Todd and Buchanan, of Glasgow, a sum of 10,300*l.* to be placed to her credit. He was also desired to say, that this sum was entirely at her own free disposal; but the donor would prefer—if she had no objection—that it should be invested in some home security, either in a good mortgage, or in the Metropolitan Board of Works Stock. It was a plain and simple letter.

"Oh, Mary, don't you understand—don't you understand?" said she. "He meant to have given you a steam-yacht, if—if you married Howard Smith. He has given you all the money you lost; and the steam-yacht, too. And there is not a word of regret about all his plans and schemes being destroyed. And this is the man we have all been making fun of."

In her conscious self-abasement she did not perceive how bewildered—how absolutely frightened—this girl was. Mary Avon took back the letter mechanically; she stood silent for a second or two, then she said, almost in a whisper—

"Giving me all that money! Oh, I cannot take it—I cannot take it! I should not have stayed here—I should not have told him anything—I—I—wish to go away—"

But the common sense of the older woman came to her rescue. She took the girl's hand firmly, and said—

"You shall not go away. And when it is your good fortune to meet with such a friend as that, you shall not wound him and insult him by refusing what he has given to you. No; but you will go at once and thank him."

"I cannot—I cannot," she said, with both her hands trembling. "What shall I say? How can I thank him? If he were my own father or brother, how could I thank him?—"

Her friend left the room for a second, and returned.

"He is in the library alone," said she. "Go to him. And do not be so ungrateful as to even speak of refusing."

The girl had no time to compose any speech. She walked to the library door, timidly tapped at it, and entered. The Laird was seated in an easy-chair, reading.

When he saw her come in—he had been expecting a servant with coffee, probably—he instantly put aside his book.

"Well, Miss Mary?" said he cheerfully.

She hesitated. She could not speak; her throat was choking. And then, scarcely knowing what she did, she sank down before him, and put her head and her hands on his knees, and burst out crying and sobbing. And all that he could hear of any speech-making, or of any gratitude, or thanks, was only two words—

"*My father!*"

He put his hand gently on the soft black hair.

"Child," said he, "it is nothing. I have kept my word."

## A New Study of Tennyson.

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### PART II.

And well his words become him : is he not  
A full-cell'd honeycomb of eloquence  
Stored from all flowers ?—EDWIN MORRIS.

IN a former number of this Magazine we drew attention to certain peculiarities in the work of the Laureate which had not, in our opinion, been sufficiently appreciated by his many critics. We ventured to point out that he belongs to a class of poets whose work has a twofold value, a value, that is to say, dependent on its obvious, simple, and intrinsic beauties, which is its exoteric and popular side, and a value dependent on niceties of adaptation, allusion, and finish, which is its esoteric and critical side; that he is to a certain point only the poet of the people, that he is pre-eminently the poet of the cultured, that his services to art will never be properly understood till his writings come to be studied in detail, till they are, as those of his masters have been, submitted to the ordeal of the minutest critical investigation ; till the delicate mechanism of his diction shall be analysed as scholars analyse the kindred subtleties of Sophocles and Virgil, till the sources of his plots have been laid bare, and the original and the copy placed side by side ; till we are in possession of comparative commentaries on his poems as exhaustive as those with which Orelli illustrated Horace, and Matthias, Gray. We ventured to suggest that his poems should be studied, not as we study those of the fathers of Song, as we study those of Homer, Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare, but as we study those who stand first in the second rank of poets ; that in dealing with him we have to deal not with a Homer, but with an Apollonius, not with an Alceus, but with a Horace ; not so much with a poet of original genius, as with a great artist, with one whose mastery lies in assimilative skill, whose most successful works are not direct studies from simple nature, but studies from nature interpreted by art. That he belongs, in a word, to a school which stands in the same relation to the literature of England as the Alexandrian poets stood to the literature of Greece, and as the Augustan poets stood to the literature of Rome.

We will illustrate our meaning. In the works of the fathers of poetry everything is drawn directly from Nature. Their characters are the characters of real life. The incidents they describe have their counterpart in human experience. When they paint inanimate objects, either simply in detail, or comprehensively in group, their pictures are

transcripts of what they have with their own eyes witnessed. In description for the mere sake of description, they never indulge. The physical universe is with them merely the stage on which the tragico-comedy of life is evolving itself. Their language is, as a rule, plain and simple. When they are obscure the obscurity arises not from affectation but from necessity. Little solicitous about the niceties of expression, they are in no sense of the word stylists, they have no ambitious ornaments, few tropes, and nothing of what the Latin critics call the *delicia et lenocinia verborum*. Their object was to describe and interpret, not to refine and subtilise. They were great artists, not because they worked on critical principles, but because they communed with truth. They were true to Art because they were true to Nature. In the school of which we take Virgil and the Laureate to be the most conspicuous representatives, a school which seldom fails to make its appearance in every literature at a certain point of its development, all this is reversed. Their material is derived not from the world of Nature, but from the world of Art. The hint, the framework, the method of their most characteristic compositions, seldom or never emanate from themselves. Take their *dramatis personæ*. The only powerful portrait in Virgil is a study from Euripides and Apollonius, the rest are shadows, mere outlines, suggested sometimes by Homer and sometimes by the Greek dramatists. Mr. Tennyson's Arthur and Launcelot were the creations of Malory, or rather of those poets who supplied Malory with his romance. His Ulysses is a study from Dante. His most subtly elaborated character, Lucretius, is the result of a minute and sympathetic study of the *De Rerum Natura*. His minor heroes and heroines, his Eleanores, his Madelines, his Marianas, are rather embodiments of peculiar moods and fancies than human beings. When Virgil sits down to write pastorals, he reproduces Theocritus with servile fidelity. When he writes didactic poetry he takes Hesiod for his model. When he composes the *Aeneid*, he casts the first part in the mould of the *Odyssey*, and the second part in the mould of the *Iliad*. He is careful also to introduce no episode for which he cannot point to his pattern. So with the Laureate. Mr. Tennyson's *Idylls* are a series of incidents from the Arthurian Romances. His *Enid* is from Lady Charlotte Guest's *Mabinogion*. His classical studies—Cænone, Ulysses, Tithonus, Lucretius, were possibly suggested by the author of *Laodamia*, possibly by the soliloquies in the Greek dramas. His English Idylls are obviously modelled on Theocritus and Wordsworth. In Wordsworth's *Michael* he found a model for *Enoch Arden*. His *In Memoriam* was suggested by Petrarch; his *Dream of Fair Women* by Chaucer; his *Godiva* by Moultrie; the Women's University in the *Princess* by Johnson. His *Lotus-Eaters* is an interpretative sketch from the *Odyssey*; his *Golden Supper* is from Boccaccio; his *Dora* is the versification of a story by Miss Mitford. When Virgil has a scene to describe, or a simile to draw, he betakes him first to his predecessors to find a model, and then proceeds to fill in his sketch. With a touch here

and a touch there, now from memory, now from observation, borrowing here an epithet and there a phrase—adding, subtracting, heightening, modifying, substituting one metaphor for another, developing what is latent in suggestive imagery, laying under contribution the vast range of Greek and Roman literature,—the unwearied artist patiently toils on, till his precious mosaic is without a flaw, till every gem in the coronet of his genius has received the last polish. It has been the pleasing task of a hundred generations of the learned to follow this consummate artist step by step to discover his gems in their rough state, and to compare them in that state with the state in which they are when they leave his finishing hand. Such an investigation is little less than an analysis of the principles of good taste, and from such an investigation the poet has infinitely more to gain than to lose. It is the object of these papers to show that much of Mr. Tennyson's most valuable work is of a similar character, that he possesses, like Virgil, some of the finest qualities of original genius, but that his style and method are, like the style and method of the Roman, essentially artificial and essentially reflective. With both of them expression is the first consideration. If the matter be meagre, the form is always perfect; if the ideas are fine, the clothing is still finer. Their composition resembles the sculpture described by Ovid—*materiem superabat opus*—the workmanship is more precious than the material. One of the most highly finished passages Virgil ever produced was the description of a boy whipping his top; one of the finest passages in all Mr. Tennyson's writings is the comparison between the heavy fall of a drunken man and the fall of a wave tumbling on the shore.\* The diction of both is often so subtly elaborated that it defies analysis. Dissect, for example, the line "*discolor unde auri per ramos aura refusit*," and you reduce it to nonsense. Dissect

There with her milk-white arms and shadowy hair  
She made her face a darkness from the king,

and it becomes unintelligible. When Virgil wishes to describe a shepherd wondering whether after the lapse of a few years he will see his farm again, he writes—

*Post aliquot, mea regna videns mirabor aristas?*

When Mr. Tennyson has occasion to allude to the month of March, he speaks of

The roaring moon  
*Of daffodil and ericus.*

Their expressions not unfrequently resemble enigmas.  
A labyrinth becomes in Virgil,

iter, quā signa sequendi  
Falleret indepresus et irremeabilis error;

\* See the lines in *The Last Tournament*, beginning—

Down from the causeway heavily to the swamp  
Fell, as the crest, &c.

and the life of Christ becomes, in the Laureate's phraseology—

The sinless years  
That breathed beneath the Syrian blue.

The works of both poets abound in these ingenious periphrases. No two poets have so completely triumphed over what Horace tells us is the most difficult of all arts—the art of expressing commonplaces with originality. Their poems are store-houses of every figure in the vocabulary of rhetoricians. There is scarcely a page in Virgil which is not loaded with Hellenisms and with allusions to the literature of Greece, often of such a kind as to make them unintelligible except to those who know where to turn for a commentary. Mr. Tennyson's diction teems with similar peculiarities. He is not only continually imitating the Greek and Roman writers, but he is continually transplanting their idioms and their phrases into our tongue. An unlearned reader must indeed be often at a loss when confronted with turns like these : "This way and that dividing the swift mind ;" "laughed with alien lips ;" "finished to the finger nail ;" "sneezed out a full God-bless-you left and right ;" "he stood four square ;" "cooked his spleen ;" and the like.

Where Virgil particularly excels is where he is improving in detail upon Homer, upon Hesiod, upon Apollonius, or upon Ennius ; in his descriptive passages, and pre-eminently in his similes. His masterpieces are the fourth and the sixth *Aeneids*. In the first he follows the third and fourth books of the *Argonautica*. In the second he is following the eleventh *Odyssey*. Many of his phrases, his turns, his cadences, his epithets—the *disjecta membra* of his diction, are still to be found scattered up and down the Greek poets, and the remains of the older Roman masters, his obligations to which have been pointed out by more than one of his critics. What the literature of the Old World was to the greatest artist of antiquity, that is the literature of the Old and New World to the greatest artist of our day. A parallel between Virgil and Tennyson might, we believe, be drawn closer than any other parallel which could be instituted between two poets. Such a parallel is, however, no part of our present task. Our object is merely to show that Mr. Tennyson, so far as the character of his work is concerned, stands in the same relation to the poetry of England as Virgil stood to the poetry of Rome ; that they belong to the same school, that to be enjoyed thoroughly they must be studied critically, and that to be studied critically they must be studied with a constant eye to their connection with their predecessors. We shall therefore make no apology for continuing our former paper, and we offer what follows, not as any catalogue of plagiarisms, but simply as material for an illustrative commentary on the works of the greatest poet of modern times. The ancient critics were never weary of illustrating the poems of Virgil by elaborate series of parallel passages, and it was by the aid of such com-

mentaries that his peculiar excellence became properly appreciated. There is surely no reason why works which are in point of execution inferior to none of the masterpieces of antiquity should not be studied with similar diligence and on a similar method by ourselves. A few of the parallel passages to which we shall direct attention were obviously professed imitations, some of them may have been unconscious recollections, and many of them no doubt are merely casual coincidences. To begin, then.

In the early lyrics the predominant influences are Coleridge and Keats, the resemblance lying not so much in particular passages as in the essence of the whole—

As having clasped a rose  
Within the palm, the rose being ta'en away,  
The hand retains a little breath of sweet,  
Holding a faint perfume of his sweet guest.

If we examine them more particularly, we shall find that from the first have been borrowed rhythm and cadence, from the second are derived that languid beauty, that voluptuous purity, that excessive richness of expression, and that curious intermixture of archaic phraseology with modern sentiment, which are the most striking characteristics of these poems. We may notice, also, how carefully the epithets and phrases have been culled from various sources. To take a few instances from many :

It will change but it will not die.—*Nothing will Die*.

From Shelley's *Cloud*—

I change but I cannot die.

The laws of marriage *charactered*  
*Upon the blanched tablets* of her heart.—*Isabel*.

Compare Aeschylus, *Prometheus*, 791—

$\eta\eta \epsilon\gamma\rho\delta\phi\nu \sigma\delta \mu\eta\mu\sigma\sigma\eta \delta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\tau\omega\eta \phi\tau\eta\acute{\omega}\nu$ ,

or more directly Heywood's *Woman Killed with Kindness*—

Within the red-leaved *tablets* of her heart.

So in the *Ode to Memory* we have "ribbed sand," which occurs in the second part of the *Ancient Mariner*; "wattled folds" from *Comus*, "storied walls" from Milton and Gray. The magnificent epithet myriad-minded, which occurs in the same poem, has a curious history. It was discovered first by Coleridge, as a phrase *μυριόνος* in some Byzantine critic, and applied by him with happy propriety to Shakespeare. So also we have in the *Poet* the epithet "secretest," from *Macbeth*, "the secretest man of blood"—the *breathing Spring*, from Pope's *Messiah*, "with all the incense of the breathing Spring." So again, in *Sea Faeries*, "the ridged sea," from *Lear* (act. iv. scene 6), "Horns whelk'd and waved like the ridged sea." So also "full-sailed verse" in *Eleanore* recalls Shakspeare's eighty-sixth sonnet, "the full sail of

his great *verse*." The beautiful epithet "*apple-cheek'd*" in the *Islet*, "a bevy of Eroses *apple-cheek'd*," is from Theocritus, *Idyll*, xxv. 1.

χ' ἀ μαλοπέργος Ἀγάνα.

I feel the *tears of blood* arise (*Oriana*),

recalls *Ford's Brother and Sister*—

Wash every word thou utterest

*In tears of blood*.

We may notice that the first three stanzas of *Eleanore* bear a curious resemblance to a singularly beautiful fragment of Ibycus; compare the spirit and images of Mr. Tennyson's verses with the following lines:

'Ευρίβαλε, γλαυκέων Χαρίτων θάλος  
καλλικόμων μελέδημα, σὲ μὲν Κύπριος  
ἄ τ' ἄγανοβλέφαρος Πειθώ ροδέσιτιν  
ἔ κνθεσιν θρέψαν  
μύρτα τε καὶ λαγόν θέληρυσος  
μᾶλα τε καὶ ροδα καὶ τέρεινα δάφνα,  
τάμος δύντος κλυτὸς ὥρθος ἔγερσιν ἀηδόνας.

These three poems—*Adeline*, *Margaret*, and *Eleanore*—should also be compared with Wordsworth's *Triad*, which possibly suggested them.

Nor in passing should we forget to place side by side with Tennyson's exquisite *Mariana* the four lovely lines in which Sappho is describing some *Mariana* of antiquity :

δέδυκε μὲν ἀ σελάννα  
καὶ Πληγάδες, μέσαιδε  
νύκτες, παρὰ δ' ἔρχετ' ἄρα,  
Ἴγω δε μύρα κατεβδῶ.

*In Mariana in the South*—

Large Hesper glitter'd on her tear,

reminds us of Keats—

No light

Could glimmer on their tears.—*Hyperion*, book ii.

In *The Two Voices* we may notice two or three parallels. The line describing the insensibility of the dead man to the world—

His sons grew up that bear his name,  
Some grew to honour, some to shame,  
But he is chill to praise or blame,

recall Job, chapter xiv. :

His sons come to honour, and he kneweth not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not.

The lines—

Moreover something is or seems  
That touches me with mystic gleams  
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams :  
Of something felt, like something here,  
Of something done I know not where,

find an appropriate commentary in Wordsworth's splendid *Ode*:

But there's a tree, of many, one,  
A single field which I have look'd upon;  
Both of them speak of something that is gone.  
The pansy at my feet  
Doth the same tale repeat,  
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

It may be fanciful, but we have often thought that, as Mr. Tennyson was indebted to Homer for the suggestion of *The Lotus-Eaters*, so he must have been fresh from the study of Bion and Moschus when he sat himself down to the composition of that delicious poem. In two of their exquisite fragments are to be found all those qualities which characterize Mr. Tennyson's poem—its languid and dreamy beauty, its soft and luscious verse, its tone, its sentiment. How exactly parallel, for example, are the following passages:

All things have rest, why should we toil alone?

Death is the end of life, ah why  
Should life all labour be?

*εἰς πόσον ἂ δειλοὶ καμάτως κ' εἰς ἔργα πονεῦμες;*  
*ψυχὴν δὲ ἔχοι τίνος ποτὶ κέρδεα καὶ ποτὶ τέχνας*  
*βάλλομεν, ἴμειροντες ἀεὶ πολὺ πλήνον, ὅλῳ*  
*λαθόμεθ ἡ ἄρα πάντες θτι θνατοὶ γενόμεσθα*  
*χῶς βραχὺν ἐκ Μοίρας ἀδύομεν χρόνον.*

BION, Idyll iv.

Is there any peace  
In ever climbing up the climbing wave?

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,

To watch the emerald-colour'd water falling  
Through many a woven acanthus wreath divine,  
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out beneath the pine.

*καὶ πόνος ἔστι θάλασσα . . .*  
*αὐτάρ ἐμοὶ γλυκὸν ὑπνος ὑπὸ πλατάνω βαθύφυλλω*  
*καὶ παγᾶς φιλέομι τὸν ἐγγύθεν θήχον ἀκούειν*  
*ἀ τέρπει φοφείσαι τὸν ἄγρικον, οὐχὶ ταράσσει.*

MOSCHUS, Idyll v.

It may be observed, by the way, that in the *Princess* the English poet has used the same, or nearly the same, epithets for the plane-tree as Moschus has done in the passage just quoted, "the full-leaved *platans* of the vale." With Bion and Moschus we cannot but think that he must have been lingering over Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*. Compare, for example, the two passages which follow with *The Lotus-Eaters*:

Was nought around but images of rest,  
Sleep-soothing groves and quiet lawns between,

And flowing beds that slumberous influence kest,  
From poppies breath'd, and beds of pleasant green.

Meantime unnumbered glittering streamlets play'd,  
And hurled everywhere their waters sheen,  
That as they bicker'd through the sunny glade,  
Though restless still themselves, a lulling murmur made.

A pleasant land of drowsihed it was,  
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye,  
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,  
*For ever flushing round a summer sky.*

In the fine poem of *Fatima*, the lines :

O Love! O fire! once he drew  
With one long kiss my whole soul through  
My lips,

bear a singularly close resemblance to a passage in Achilles Tatius' *Clitophon and Leucippe* (book ii.) :

ἢ δε (ψυχή) ταραχθεῖσα τῷ φιλήματι  
πάλλεται, εἰ δὲ μὴ τοῖς σπλάγχνοις ἢν  
δεδεμένη, ἡκολούθησεν ἀν ἐλκυσθεῖσα ἕνω  
τοῖς φιλήμασιν.

The ballad of *Oriana* was evidently suggested by the old ballad of *Helen of Kirkconnel*, both poems being based on a similar incident, and both poems being the passionate soliloquy of the bereaved lover, though Mr. Tennyson's treatment of the subject is of course all his own. In the *Palace of Art* we may notice that the phrase "the first of those who know," applied to the great philosophers, is translated from Dante, who calls Aristotle "Il maestro di color che sanno." In *Lady Clara Vere de Vere* the sentiment "Tis only noble to be good," on which the poem is such a fine comment, was first preached by Menander :

ὅς ἂν εὖ γεγονὼς ἢ τῇ φύσει πρὸς τ' ἀγαθὰ  
καν Αἰθίοψ ἢ, μῆτερ, ἔστιν εὐγενῆς.

And by Dante, *Convito* :

E gentilezza dovunque virtute;  
Ma non virtute ov' ella.

The conclusion of *Audley Court*, where the tranquillising effects of night are described as *gladdening the heart* of the spectators, would appear to be a reminiscence of the famous moonlight scene in the eighteenth Iliad, where

γέγηθε δέ τε φρένα ποιεῖν

as he feels the influence of the tranquil night.

The curious expression "baby sleep" in the *Gardener's Daughter*,

And in her bosom bore the baby sleep,

is to be found in Shelley's *Queen Mab* :

And on her lips  
The baby sleep is pillow'd.

In the *Palace of Art* the picture of Europa is from Moschus.  
In the *Dream of Fair Women* the proud boast of Cleopatra,

I died a Queen. The Roman soldier found  
Me lying dead, my crown about my brows, &c.,

is a splendid *transfusion* of the last lines in Horace's ode (i. xxxvi.) :

Invidens  
*Privata deduci superbo*  
*Non humiliis mulier triumpho,*

as the dirges of the young Jewish maiden remind us closely of those breathed by the young Antigone. Compare with the Laureate's verses *Antigone*, 840-876. Again, the lines :—

With that she tore her robe apart, and half  
The polished argent of her breast to sight  
Laid bare,

is an almost literal translation from the *Hecuba*, 556 :

λαβοῦσα πέπλον ἐξ ἄκρας ἐπωμίδος  
ἔρηγκε. . .  
μαστούς τ' ἔδειξε, στέργα θ' ὡς ἀγάλματος  
κάλλιστα.

The "polished argent" exactly and most happily *interpreting the idea* suggested by the *ἀγάλματος*.

In the same poem the bold and graphic phrase,  
Saw God divide the night with flying flame,  
suggests Horace's

Diespiter  
*Igni corusco nubila dividens.*—i. xxxiv.

In the next poem we may notice in passing an odd coincidence. In *Edwin Morris* we find :

She sent a note, the seal an *elle vous suit* ;  
and in *Don Juan*, Julia's letter is despatched in an envelope,  
The seal a sunflower—*elle vous suit partout*.

The whole plot of *Dora* to the minutest details is taken from a prose story of Miss Mitford's (*Our Village*, 2nd series), the only difference being that in the poem Mary Hay becomes Mary Morrison. That this circumstance has not been intimated in the poem is due, no doubt, to the fact that the Laureate, like Gray, leaves his commentators to trace him to his raw material; though why he should have prefixed a preface to the *Golden Supper* acknowledging his debt to Boccaccio, and should have omitted to do so in the case of *Dora* it is difficult to understand. Miss Mitford has certainly more to gain from the honour than the author of the *Decamerone*.

The physical effect of joy on the spirits so happily described in *The Gardener's Daughter*—

I rose up  
Full of his bliss and . . .  
Felt earth as air beneath me,

has been noticed by Massinger, *City Madam*, act iii. scene 3.

I am sublim'd. Gross earth  
Supports me not, I walk on air.

We now come to *Ulysses*. The germ, the spirit, and the sentiment of this poem are from the twenty-sixth canto of Dante's *Inferno*. Mr. Tennyson has indeed done little but fill in the sketch of the great Florentine. As is usual with him in all cases where he borrows, the details and minuter portions of the work are his own; he has added grace, elaboration, and symmetry; he has called in the assistance of other poets. A rough crayon draught has been metamorphosed into a perfect picture. As the resemblances lie not so much in expression as in the general tone, we will in this case substitute for the original a literal version. *Ulysses* is speaking :

Neither fondness for my son, nor reverence for my aged sire, nor the due love which ought to have gladdened Penelope, could conquer in me the ardour which I had to become experienced in the world, and in human vice and worth. I put out into the deep open sea with but one ship, and with that small company which had not deserted me. . . . I and my companions were old and tardy when we came to that narrow pass where Hercules assigned his landmarks. "O brothers," I said, "who through a hundred thousand dangers have reached the West, deny not to this the brief vigil of your senses that remain, experience of the unpeopled world beyond the sun. Consider your origin, ye were not formed to live like brutes, but to follow *virtue* and *knowledge*." . . . Night already saw the other pole with all its stars, and ours so low that it rose not from the ocean floor.

Now compare the key verses of Mr. Tennyson's poem. *Ulysses* speaks :

I cannot rest from travel : I will drink  
Life to the lees. All times I have enjoyed ;  
Greatly have suffered—greatly both with those  
That lov'd me and alone.  
How dull it is to pause, to make an end !

And vile it were  
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,  
And this grey spirit yearning in desire  
To follow knowledge.  
There lies the port : the vessel puffs her sail.  
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,  
Souls that have toil'd and wrought and thought with me,  
That ever with a frolic welcome took  
The thunder and the sunshine.

You and I are old.  
Death closes all ; but something, ere the end,  
Some work of noble note may yet be done.

Come, my friends,  
 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.  
 Push off! . . . for my purpose holds  
 To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths  
 Of all the western stars, until I die.

In the other parts of the poem the imitations from Homer and Virgil are too obvious to be specified. Passing on to *Locksley Hall*, it may not be uninteresting to add to the parallel passages pointed out in a former paper two or three others.

As the husband is, the wife is,  
 recalls Scott's *Abbot*, chapter ii. : "Know that the rank of the man rates that of the wife." The fine line—

Cramming all the blast before it, *in its breast a thunderbolt*,  
 recalls Tasso (*Gerusalemme*, canto ix.) :

Nuova nube di polve ecco vicina,  
 Che fulgori in grembo tiene.

The singular image in the couplet—

Love took up the glass of Time, and turned it in his glowing hands;  
 Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands,

finds a sort of parallel in a pretty verse by that elegant writer of happy trifles, W. R. Spencer :

Thy eye with clear account remarks  
 The ebbing of Time's glass,  
 When all its sands are diamond sparks  
 That dazzle as they pass.

The magnificent line—

And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips,  
 looks like a reminiscence of Guarini's *Pastor Fido*, act ii. scene 6 :

Ma i colpi di due labbra innamorate,  
 Quando a ferir si va bocca con bocca,  
 . . . . . ove l'un alma e l'altra  
 Corre.

A sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things,  
 is of course Dante's—

Nessun maggior dolore  
 Che ricordarsi del tempo felice  
 Nella miseria.

In *Oenone* the line

Mine eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,  
 is taken almost without alteration from Part II. of Henry VI., act ii. scene 3.

Mine eyes are full of tears, my heart of grief.

In another very popular poem of the Laureate's we have a curiously interesting illustration of the skill with which he changes into his own precious metal the less refined ore of other poets. It will not be neces-

sary to quote his lyric, "Home they brought her warrior dead," as it will, no doubt, be fresh in the memory of every one who is likely to be interested in this paper; so we proceed at once to the parallels. In Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel* (canto i. stanza 9) appear the following verses:

O'er her warrior's bloody bier  
The ladye dropp'd nor flower nor tear,  
Until, amid her sorrowing clan,  
Her son lisp'd from the nurse's knee.

Then fast the mother's tears did seek  
To dew the infant's kindling cheek.

Curiously enough, the climax of the piece—the sudden and passionate resolve on the part of the bereaved parent to live for the child—closely resembles a passage in Darwin's once celebrated episode of *Eliza in the Botanic Garden*. There the mother has been slain in war, and the young husband, distracted with grief, has abandoned himself to despair; but on his two little children being presented to his sight, exclaims, like Tennyson's heroine—

These bind to earth—for these I pray to live.

This similarity is, however, more curious than significant. But we now come to a series of very interesting parallel passages. In no poem of the Laureate's is the workmanship so strikingly superior to the material as in *The Princess*, and in no poem, with the exception perhaps of *In Memoriam*, do we find so many echoes of other singers. The lines—

A wind arose and rush'd upon the south,  
And shook the songs, the whispers, and the shrieks  
Of the wild woods together; and a voice  
Went with it: Follow—follow thou shalt win!

forcibly remind us of Shelley's—

A wind arose among the pines, and shook  
The clinging music from their boughs, and then  
Low, sweet, faint sounds, like the farewell of ghosts  
Were heard—O follow, follow me!

Again,

As when a field of corn  
Bows all its ears before the roaring East,

is, with the substitution of East for West, from Homer (*Iliad* ii., lines 147-8):

*λοὶ δὲ κινήσει Ζέφυρος βαθὺ λήϊον, ἐλθὼν,  
λάβησος, ἀπαγίξων, ἐπὶ τὸν μενεῖ αὐταχνέσσιν.*

The ingenious simile in which the sudden collapse of a speaker is compared to the sudden collapse of a sail, is apparently borrowed from Dante:

Till as when a boat  
Tacks, and her slacken'd sail flaps, &c.

as it  
to be  
In  
owing

Quali dal vento le gonfiate vele  
Caggiono avvolte, poichè l'alber fiacca.

*Inferno*, canto vii. 13-14.

Our weakness somehow shapes the shadow, *Time*.

This expression is from Wordsworth :

Death, the skeleton,  
And *Time*, the shadow.—*Yews*.

The curious expression—

Stared with great eyes and laugh'd with open lips,

is literally, of course, from the 20th *Odyssey* :

οι δ' ήδη γναθμοῖσι γελάφων ἀλλοτρίοισιν.

So, again, the fine simile in which the unshaken firmness of Ida is compared to a pine vexed and tried by storm, was evidently suggested by the magnificent simile in which Virgil compares Æneas, under similar circumstances, to an oak. To Homer, Mr. Tennyson is indebted for the following :—

As one that climbs a peak to gaze

O'er land and main, and sees a great black cloud  
Drag onward from the deeps, a wall of night  
Blot out the slope of sea from verge to shore,  
And quenching lake by lake, and tarn by tarn,  
Expunge the world.

Now compare *Iliad*, iv. 275 :

Δες δ' οὔτ' ἀπὸ σκοπῆς εἶδε νέφος αἰπόλος ἀνήρ,  
ἔρχομεν κατὰ πόντον υπὸ Ζεφύροιο ιώῃ,  
τῷ δέ τ' ἄγευθεν ἔσντι, μελάντερον, ἡῦτε πόσσα,  
φαίνετ' ίδην κατὰ πόντον, ἔγει δέ τε λαίλαπα πολλήν.

The beautiful line—

*The moan of doves in immemorial elms*,

suggests Virgil's—

Nec gemere aëria cessabit turtur ab ulmo.

*Elogue i. 59.*

It may not be uninteresting to notice also that the summary of the Lady Psycho's lecture bears some resemblance to that of the learned lady in Prior's *Alma*. Compare—

This world was once, &c.

Then the monster, then the man.

Thereupon she took

A bird's-eye view of all th' ungracious past :

Gland'd at the legendary Amazon,

Appraised the Lycian custom ;

Ran down the Persian, Grecian, Roman lines

Of empire.

Till, warming with her theme,

She fulmin'd out her scorn of Laws Salique

And little-footed China, touched on Mahomet

With much contempt, and came to chivalry.

Now let us listen to Prior's learned dame :

She kindly talked, at least three hours,  
Of plastic forms and mental powers,  
Described our pre-existing station  
Before this vile terrene creation.  
And lest we should grow weary, madam,  
To cut things short, came down to Adam ;  
From thence, as fast as she was able,  
She drowns the world and builds up Babel ;  
Through Syria, Persia, Greece, she goes,  
And takes the Romans in the close.

This is probably only a mere coincidence ; but we venture to think that the following singularly happy simile must have been an imitation, more or less unconscious, on the part of Mr. Tennyson.

Bland the smile that, *like a wrinkling wind*  
On glassy water, drove his cheek in lines.

Compare these lines from Shelley's *Prince Athanase* :

O'er the visage wan  
Of Athanase, a ruffling atmosphere  
Of dark emotion, *a swift shadow ran,*  
*Like wind upon some forest-bosom'd lake*  
*Glassy and dark.*

Another felicitous and ingenious simile appears to have been suggested by a passage in Wordsworth's *Excursion* :—

He has a solid base of temperament,  
But as the *water-lily starts and slides*  
*Upon the level in little puffs of wind,*  
*Though anchor'd to the bottom*—such is he.

In the fifth book of the *Excursion* we find

A thing  
Subject . . . . to vital accidents ;  
And, *like the water-lily*, lives and thrives,  
*Whose root is fix'd in stable earth, whose head*  
*Floats on the tossing waves.*

The whole of the passage beginning

Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height,  
is obviously modelled on Theocritus, Idyll xi. 41 sqq.

A very graphic expression in *The Sleeping Beauty*,—

The silk, star-broider'd coverlet,  
*Unto her limbs itself doth mould,*

has evidently been transferred from Homer (*Iliad*, xxiv. 163), where he speaks of Priam :

*ἔντυπάς ἐν χλαινῇ κεκαλυμένος.*

The couplet in the L'Envoi of the *Day Dream*—

For we are Ancients of the Earth,  
And in the morning of the times,

is obviously merely a version of Bacon's famous paradox—"Antiquitas  
sæculi, juventus mundi."

In *Edwin Morris* the lines :

Shall not Love to me

Sneeze out a full God-bless-you, right and left?

are from Catullus, xlvi. 8, 9—

Amor, sinistram ut ante,  
Dextram sternuit approbatonem.

In *Sea Dreams* the poet has apparently laid the fragments of Pindar under contribution :

My poor venture but a fleet of glass,  
Wreck'd on a reef of visionary gold.

In the 136th fragment (edit. Schneidewin) we find :

*πελάγει δ' ἐν πολυχρόσιοι πλούτου  
πάτες ίσα νέομεν ψευδῆ πρὸς ἀκτάν.*

In Saint Simeon Stylites, when the Saint, alluding to his mortal body, observes—

This dull chrysalis  
Cracks into shining wings,

we are reminded of Carew's original but ludicrous couplet :

The soul . . .  
Broke the outward shell of sin,  
And so was hatch'd a cherubin;

or still more immediately, perhaps, of Rogers' epigram comparing man on earth to the inglorious chrysalis, and man after death to the full-fledged butterfly.

We are strongly reminded both of Horace and Virgil in the two magnificent stanzas entitled *Will*. The passage—

For him nor moves the loud world's random mock,  
Nor all Calamity's hugest waves, &c.

having been evidently suggested by the famous lines which begin the third ode of the third book ; and the verses which follow—

Who seems a promontory of rock  
That, compass'd round with turbulent sound,  
In middle ocean meets the surging shock  
Tempest-buffeted,

are as obviously borrowed from Virgil (*Aeneid*, x. 693 seq.) :

Ille velut rupes, vastum que prodit in sequor,  
Obvia ventorum furiis, expostaque ponto,  
Vim cunctam atque minas perfert colique marisque  
Ipsa immota manens.

Or possibly from the parent simile, *Iliad O.*, 618 seq. The fine expression—

Their surging charges foamed themselves away,

is, with a change in the application, a reminiscence of Æschylus (*Agamemnon*, 1030)—

*πρὸν αἰματηρὸν ἔξαφρίζεσθαι μένος.*

We may notice, also, another curiously minute appropriation of an expression from Æschylus, in the *Morte d'Arthur*:

Looking wistfully . . .  
As in a picture.

The Greek poet (*Agamemnon*, 230) describing Iphigenia, says—

*Ἐβαλλ' ἔκαστον  
ἀπ' ὄματος βέλε φιλοίκτῳ  
πρέπουσα θ' ὡς ἐν γραφāις.*

We do not propose to follow in detail the passages from the Greek and Roman poets of which Mr. Tennyson has availed himself in *Lucretius*, but we cannot forbear noticing the felicity with which he has, in adopting, interpreted a singular epithet in Horace. The line “*Voltus nimium lubricus aspici*” (*Odes*, i. xix. 8), has been interpreted by many generations of commentators as a face too *dangerous* to gaze upon. Now there is surely no reason why the epithet should not be explained as meaning a face voluptuously symmetrical, a face over which the eyes slip and wander, as it were, because in its rounded smoothness they find no particular feature on which to pause. So, reproducing the image and meaning, Mr. Tennyson—

Here an Oread—how the sun delights  
To glance and shift about her slippery sides.

A poet is, after all, the best commentator on a poet. The beautifully graphic picture,

As the dog,  
With inward yelp and restless forefoot, plies  
His function of the woodland,

is almost literally from *Lucretius*, iv. 991 :

Canes in molli sepe quiete  
Jactant crura tamen subito, vocesque repente  
Mittunt et crebro redducunt naribus auras.

In dealing with the *Idylls of the King*, we shall not attempt to discuss the question of Mr. Tennyson's obligations to the original romances, nor shall we draw any parallels from them. Such a task, though belonging essentially to our “Study,” would demand more space than we can at present afford. A few parallel passages, miscellaneous selected from various authors, must therefore bring this paper to a conclusion. Several passages have already been printed in a former essay : these, of course, are here omitted.

The fine simile in *Gareth and Lynette*, where Gareth's adversary is compared to a buoy at sea, which dips and springs but never sinks, in spite of the winds and waves rolling over it, may possibly have been suggested by a simile in Lycophron (*Cassandra*, Potter's edit. 755, 756),

where Ulysses is compared to a cork in the sea with the winds and waves rolling over it, but not sinking it :

Ἐσται, παρ' ἄλλου δ' ἄλλος, ὡς πεύκης κλάδος  
βύκτης στροβητός φελλὸν ἐνθράσκων πνοῖς.

The following coincidence is probably purely accidental, but there is a line in *Enid* bearing a singular resemblance to another verse in Lycophron :

A shell

That keeps the wear and polish of the wave.

The Greek runs (*Cassandra*, 790)—

ὅς κόγχος ἀλμυρὸν πάντοθεν περιπρίβεται.

The line—

She fear'd

In every wavering brake an ambuscade,

recalls Juvenal's timid traveller :

Et motæ ad lunam trepidabis arundinis umbram.—*Sat.* x. 21.

The simile which follows just afterwards—

Like a shoal

Of darting fish, that on a summer morn

Come slipping o'er their shadows on the sand,

But if a man who stands upon the brink

But lift a shining hand,

There is not left the twinkle of a fin—

may be compared with Keats' less finished but equally graphic picture :

Where swarms of minnows

Ever nestle

Their silver bellies on the pebbly sand;

If you but scantily hold out the hand,

That very instant not one will remain.

*He dragged his eyebrow lashes down, and made  
A snowy penthouse.*

In this bold and graphic expression the poet is indebted to Homer's

τῶν δὲ ἐπισκύνιον κέτω ἔλκεται, ὥσπε καλύπτων.

*Iliad*, xvii. 136.

The elaborate care with which the concluding paragraphs of *Merlin and Vivian* have been modelled on the verses in Virgil's fourth *Aeneid*, which describe the ruin of Dido, is obvious, though Mr. Tennyson's "What should not have been had been," is but a coarse substitute for the tact and delicacy of the Roman's

Fulsere ignes et conscient aether  
*Connubis*, summoque ulularunt vertice Nymphæ.

The fine simile in *Lancelot and Elaine*:

All together down upon him  
Bore, as a wild wave in the wide North Sea,

Green glimmering toward the summit, bears, with all  
Its stormy crests that smoke against the skies,  
Down on a bark—

is obviously borrowed from Homer (*Iliad*, xv. 624):—

ἐν δὲ πέρος ἀεὶ τε κύμα θαῦτην νητὴ πάσχοσιν  
λάβοντας νεφέων ἀνεμοτρεψὲς, ηδὲ τε πᾶσα  
ἄχνη τηπεκρύθηται.

For the “stormy crests” we may compare *Iliad*, iv. 426. The picturesque and minutely accurate “green glimmering towards the summit” is Mr. Tennyson’s own beautiful touch.

The famous line in the same idyll—

And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true—

reminds us in its striking association of jingle, antithesis, and alliteration, of a line in Sophocles (*Oedipus Rex*, 1250):

ἴνθα . . .  
ἔξ ἀνδρὸς ἔνδρα, καὶ τέκν' ἐκ τέκνων τέκοι,

while the actual antithesis has been anticipated in the *πιστὶς ἀπιστοτάρη* of Andocides, ix. 32, and the “faithful in thy unfaithfulness” of Chettle. One cannot but think that in describing the dead Elaine the poet must have remembered Byron’s beautiful picture of the dead Medora; compare the lines:

In her right hand the lily

All her bright hair streaming down  
. . . And she herself in white,  
All but her face, and that clear featur’d face  
Was lovely, for she did not seem as dead,  
But fast asleep, and lay as tho’ she smil’d.

Byron’s lines are:

In life itself she was so still and fair  
That death with gentler aspect wither’d there.  
And the cold flowers her colder hand contain’d  
In that last grasp as tenderly were strain’d  
As if she scarcely felt, but feigu’d, a sleep.

Her lips . . . seem’d as they forbore to smile,  
But the white shroud and each extended tress,  
Long, fair, &c.

In the same idyll the lines—

A trumpet blew,  
Then waiting at the doors the war-horse neigh’d  
As at a friend’s voice—

recall Ovid, *Met.* iii. 704 :

Fremit acer equus cum bellicus sere canoro  
Signa dedit tubicen pugnæque assumit amorem,

So, also, in *Enid*, the vivid image—

She saw

*Dust and the points of lances bicker in it—*

reminds us of the fine passage in the *Anabasis* of Xenophon, in which the approach of an army at a distance is described (*Anab.* i. viii. 8) : *ιφάνη κονιορτός . . . τάχα ἐῇ καὶ χαλχός τις ἡστραπτε.*

And now we must conclude. Had we thought that there would be the smallest chance of this paper or of its predecessor being misunderstood, they would never have seen the light. But we have no such fear. The purpose for which they were written has been already explained. They are offered as commentaries on works which will take their place beside the masterpieces of Greek and Roman genius, and which will, like them, be studied with minute and curious diligence by successive generations of scholars. A versatility without parallel among poets has enabled Mr. Tennyson to appeal to all classes. His poetry is the delight of the most fastidious and of the most emotional. He touches Burns on one side, and he touches Sophocles on the other. But to the scholar, and to the scholar alone, will his most precious and his most characteristic works become in their full significance intelligible. By him they will be cherished with peculiar fondness. To him they will be like the enchanted island in Shakspeare :

Full of echoes,  
Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight.

To him it will be a never-ending source of pleasure to study his Tennyson as he studies his Virgil, his Dante, and his Milton.

J. C. C.

## Giovanni Battista Belzoni.

### I.

#### BELZONI AT PADUA.

I HAVE no intention of troubling the reader with a biography of Giovanni Battista Belzoni. The birth, the short, eventful life of forty-five years, and the death of the great Italian explorer, have been written and re-written both at home and abroad: his excursions into ancient and classical Egypt are as familiar, if not more so, to the Englishman as to the Italian. My business is with a few details of his career, and especially with his death, concerning which I know more than any man now living. Finally, I would suggest certain honours due to his memory before it fades,—the fate of travellers and explorers amongst their brother men,—into the mists and glooms of the past. As, however, all are not familiar with a career, peculiarly attractive to Englishmen, which began in 1815 and which ended in 1823, the following facts, borrowed more from living authorities than from books, may not be unwelcome.

Belzoni's mother-city was Padua. A century after he was born I visited what now represents his birthplace, No. 2946 in the Via Paolotti. It stands opposite the gloomy old prison of the same name, a kind of guardhouse, whose occupation is denoted by the sentries and the wooden window-screens. The two-storied, four-windowed tenement, with its yellow walls and green shutters jealously barred in the ground-floor, bears, under the normal Paduan arcade, a small slab of white marble inscribed:

IN QUESTA CASA  
IL 5 NOV. 1778 NACQUE  
BELZONI.

The building, however, is modern. In the early quarter of our century, the street was a straggle of huts and hovels, and the garden of the present house contained more than one. They were "improved off" about 1845, on the occasion of his leading home a bride, by the present owner, Sig. Squarcina, C.E.

As the explorer tells us in his well-known *Travels*,\* the family was originally Roman, with the rights of citizenship, and the name Bolzon, or Bolzoni, was softened by him to Belzoni. One of many children, he

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\* *Narrative of Operations and Recent Discoveries in Egypt and Nubia, etc., fol. and atlas.* London, Murray, 1820.

inherited a splendid *physique* from his mother, Teresa, of the well-known Orsolato house; she is described as a woman of masculine strength and stature. His father, Jacopo, was a *tonsore*,—in plain English, a barber,—proud of the old home which he had never seen, and full of legends concerning the grandeur of Rome and his ancestry. Let me say, *sans rancune*, that there is an important difference (in kind) between a Roman *tonsore* and a northern “barber.” We must not confound old and new civilisations.

The future traveller's first journey was an escapade which is related at full length by his biographers.\* The father had taken his large and lively family for a *gita* to Monte Ortone, near the famous thermæ of classical Abano, and the day in the country had been so charming that Giambattista persuaded his younger brother Antonio to repeat the trip without the formality of asking leave. This led to further wanderings—to Ferrara, Bologna, and other places in the direction of Rome; but the two runaways, who were penniless, presently lost heart and returned home. Hence, possibly, the persistent but mistaken report which makes Belzoni's father a *cultivatore*, or peasant-proprietor, at Abano, and, consequently, a compatriot of Pietro di Abano, the “Conciliator of Doctors' Differences” (A.D. 1250–1316).

Padua, it must be confessed, has by no means neglected her worthy, as is known to every traveller who visits the Palazzo della Ragione. This curious pile, which separates the fruit market and the vegetable market, with their Dahoman umbrellas, is thoroughly out of place. The guide-books tell us that the architectural idea was borrowed from a Hindu palace; I find in it a forecast of the nineteenth century railway station. A mighty roof covers the great hall, *Il Salon di Padua*, called “of Reason” because courts of law were held here; both have the merit of being as large and as ugly as any in Italy. Inside, over the doorway, stands the great medallion in Carrara marble, two mètres in circumference, cut in *alto-rilievo*, at Rome, by Rinaldo Rinaldi of Padua, a pupil of Canova. Girt by the serpent of immortality, the head of the turbaned and long-bearded explorer looks towards the dexter chief, and bears the following simple and incorrect legend:

I.B.BELZONIVS.VETER.AEGIPTI (*sic*) MONVMNT.REPRTOR.

Below stands:

OBIIT, AET. ANN. XLV IN AFRICA. REGNO  
BENINENSI AN. MDCCXXIII.

This medallion was set up after the explorer's death. In 1819, when he revisited his native city, and, despite the *res angusta domi*, presented to her, with the pride of filial piety, two Egyptian statues, his

\* Vol. ii. pp. 11–16, *Viaggi in Egitto*, by Prof. Abate Lodovico Menin, Milano 1825. Menin was acquainted with Belzoni's mother, and with the whole family, of whom only relations on the female side (Orsolato) now remain.

compatriots showed their gratitude by a medal coined in England. It bore round the figures :

OB DONVM PATRIA GRATA

A. MDCCCXIX.

On the reverse is :

IO. BAPT. BELZONI

PATAVINO

QVI CEPHRENIS PIRAMIDEM

APIDISQ. SEPVLCRVM

PRIMVS APERVIT

ET URBEM BERENICIS

NVBIAE ET LIBYAE NON

IMPAVIDE DETEXIT.

At either side of the entrance which carries the medallion sit the two Egyptian statues alluded to. Both represent Pasht, the cat-headed goddess of Bi-Bast, or Bubastis, now Zagázig town. Brugsch Bey makes her Isis of the tabby-head, in Arabic Bissat (the cat), Osiris assuming the title of Bas or Biss (the tom-cat). The two hold in the left hand the mystic Tau ; one has well-marked whiskers *à la Rè Galantuomo* ; consequently, despite the forms, which are distinctly feminine, it has become, in local parlance, the "male mummy." "Pussy,"\* on the right is inscribed :

IO. BAPT. BELZONI. PAT.

EX THEBIS AEGYPTIS

DONVM MISIT

A.M.DCCCXIX.

CIVITAS GRATA.

Further to the left of the entrance stands the plaster statue of Belzoni, carrying on its base the artist's name, SANAVIO NATALE. It is of heroic size, at least ten feet tall, and habited in a very fancy costume : large falling collar, doublet buttoned in front, sash round waist, shorts, long stockings, and "pumps" with fancy arabesques : in Rabelaisian phrase, "pinned and jagged like lobster wadles." The right hand holds a roll of manuscript ; the left controls a cloak, or rather a fringed cloth, a curtain, which is, I presume, the picturesque and poetical phase of cloak. This work of art has two merits. It shows the explorer's figure exactly as it never was, and it succeeds in hiding his face from a near view ; the rapt regard is so "excelsior," so heavenwards, that the spectators see only a foreshortened nose based upon a tangled bush of beard. The inscription also has its value : it is long, while it says little ; it omits one of the names ; and, as a record of exploits, it indulges too freely in the

\* In the *Gold Mines of Midian* I derive this word from "Bissah." The cat is a later introduction into Europe, and the very word (*Katt*, *Catus*) is probably Semitic.

figure called "hysteron-proteron." I copy it because, being provisional, there are hopes of its growing out of childish defects, and the numbers in parentheses show what should have been the proper order of the lines : \*

GIOVANNI (add BATTISTA) BELZONI  
NATURALISTA IDRATICO ARCHEOLOGO  
(4) IL RECONDITO EGITTO DIVINANDO SVELÓ  
(3) ERCVLEO INFOCILATO  
(9) ALLE INGORDE SABBIE TOGLIEVA BERENICE  
(8) LA SECONDA PIRAMIDE (6) I SEPOLCRI D'IPSAMBVL  
(7) LA NECROPOLI PSAMETICA (*sic*) PENETRAVA†  
(5) SMOSSÈ LA MOLE DE MEMNONE FONDATO IL MVSEO BRITTANICO (*sic*)  
PARLÓ FAMA SI GRANDE  
CHE GLI STRANIERI STANCHI D'INVIDIARE ONORARONO  
A PIÙ ARDVE IMPRESE SCORREA L'AFRICA  
IL SIRIO ARDORE SPENSE L'AVDACIA  
CREBBE LA GLORIA

—  
NATO IN PADOVA 1778 MORÌ A GATO D'AFRICA 1823.

The first three lines are correct enough, "barring" the mutilated name. Belzoni, after preparing to become a monk, studied the elements of engineering at Rome, which, on the French occupation (1803), he exchanged for London. "Hercules" probably alludes to the fact, forgotten by his countrymen, that he supported himself by feats of strength at various theatres. He was a magnificent specimen of a man, strong as a Hercules, handsome as an Apollo; the various portraits taken about this time show the fine features which rarely, except in statues, distinguish the professional athlete. He had that "divination," that archaeological instinct, which *nascitur, non fit*: we see it now in MM. Mariette, Cesnola, and Schliemann, whose name is Shalomon.

After marrying, and passing nine years in England, Belzoni with his wife drifted to Egypt (June 9, 1815), then happy under the rule of Mohammed Ali the Great. He began, as an "independent member," with setting up a hydraulic machine at the Shubrah Gardens, carrying owls to Athens, coals to Newcastle. He failed, and fell into the ranks. Nile-land was then, as now, a field for plunder; fortunes were made by digging, not gold, but antiques; and the archaeological field became a battle-plain for two armies of Dragomans and Fellah-navvies. One was headed by the redoubtable Salt; the other owned the command of Dro-

\* The 1st of January was up the Nile; the 2nd, entered the Second Pyramid and continued till the 3rd up stream; the 4th was to Berenike on the Red Sea, and the 5th to the so-called Oasis of Ammon.

† This orthography, and even *Psamatikhos*, is found; but the *m* of *Psammis*, or *Psammetic*, probably bore in this a sign of reduplication (§).

vetti, or Drouetti, the Piedmontese Consul and Collector, whose sharp Italian brain had done much to promote the great Pasha's interests.

Belzoni, without a regular engagement, cast his lot with the Englishman, and was sent to Thebes. Here he shipped on board a barge and floated down to el-Rashid (Rosetta), the bust of Rameses II., miscalled "Young Memnon,"—(Miamun or Amun-mai). The Colossus reached its long home, the large Hall in the British Museum, without any of the mishape which have lately attended a certain "Needle."\* The explorer then travelled, *via* Alexandria, Cairo, and Edfu, to the Isles of Elephantine and Philæ, both, by-the-by, meaning Elephant (*Arabic el-Fil*), despite Wilkinson. The enemy attacked him as he was removing his obelisk from Philæ; it consisted of an "Arab" mob, numbering some thirty, under the command of two Italians—Lebueo and the "renegade Rossignano," with Drouetti in the rear. Belzoni defended himself in a characteristic way, by knocking down an assailant, seizing his ankles, and using him as a club upon the foemen's heads. This novel weapon, in the Samson style, gained a ready victory. He reached Wady Halfah (second Cataract), and cleared the deposits of Typhon from the Ramesseums of Abu-Simbal (*Ipsambul*). The so-called Crystal Palace contains a caricature of these rock-temples; and country folk identify the Colossi with "Gog and Magog."

In 1817 Belzoni, still under Salt, made his third run up-country, and attacked the famous Bibán el-Mulük, the "Gates (*i.e.* tombs) of the Kings." The hollow sound of a wall revealed an inner chamber, and the sinking of the ground, caused by rain, led to the Sepulchre of Sethi I. His description of crawling, snail-like, through the passages is admirable. The results of this work best known in England, are the Colossal head and arms sent to the British Museum; and the Sarco-phagus, of semi-transparent arragonite, afterwards (1824) sold by Salt to Sir John Soane for 2,000*l.* "Belzoni's Tomb" preserves his name in Egypt; but I have noticed that of late years certain tourist-authors have forgotten the duty of rendering honour where honour is due.

During 1817–1818 Belzoni worked at the *Troici lapidis mons*, vulgarly known as the "Second Pyramid." He had some difficulty in persuading the Bedawin-Fellahs of the west bank to assist him; but, as usual, he ended by succeeding. He cleared the upper of the two openings, and found that the Arabs had been before him. The inscription given by him (p. 273) and copied into every hand-book is, let me say, despite of Professor Lee and M. Salámé, in part unintelligible. Perhaps Belzoni's occupation is not gone. It appears to many that those

\* In 1822, John Murray, of Albemarle Street, published six "Plates illustrative of the Researches and Operations of G. Belzoni in Egypt," &c. They are, 1. General View of the Site of Thebes. 2. The Mode in which the Colossal Head of Young Memnon was taken from Thebes. 3. India from the Ceiling of the Great Vaulted Hall, in the Tomb supposed to be that of Psammis, at Thebes. 4 and 5. Ruins of Ombos, &c. 6. Interior of Temple in the Island of Philæ.

vast sepulchral mansions must contain many chambers; and I ask myself why the pendulum and the new sound-instruments should not be scientifically tried.

In September, 1817, our explorer set out from Esue to visit Berenike (*Troglodytica*). This Port of Ptolemy Lagi was the African terminus of the Indian "overland," intended to turn the stormy and dangerous Gulf of Suez; and it held its own till supplanted by Myos Hormos and other ports further north. The goods were disembarked, were carried by caravans through the Desert of the Thebaïs, to Coptos, Kobther, Caphtor (?), Koft, Kaft or Koft on the Nile; and thence were floated down to Alexandria. The land journey was estimated at 258 Roman miles, and the march of twelve days gave an average of 21 per diem: our modern itineraries make the total 271 English statute miles. A similar western line was also taken, to escape the even more turbulent and perilous Gulf of Akabah; the road lying from Leuke Kome (el-Haurá) through the Land of Midian to Rhinocolura (el-Arís), on the Mediterranean.

At Berenike, following M. Caliud, and seeking for sulphur, Belzoni discovered a temple of Serapis; he explored the emerald mines of Jebel Zabbárah to the north-west, and the "Emerald Island," or St. John's, which the Arabs call Semergeh, or Semergid, from the Greek Smaragdos. Berenike has twice been visited by my friend General Purdy (Pasha), in 1871 and 1873. He found remains of mines about the Jebel el-Zabergah (Zumurrud?) with scoriæ, handmills, and other appurtenances of the craft, all along the road.\* Belzoni's last trip (1819) was to Moeris and "Elloah" (El-wah) el-Kasr, the smaller oasis, of which he is the discoverer. He was wrong, however, in identifying it with the "Wady" of Jupiter Ammon, which is Siwah.

After five years of splendid and profitable work in Egypt, Belzoni left it for ever (1819). In London he published his book, canvassed his friends, and prepared to carry out the dream of his life,—a plunge into the then unexplored depths of the African continent. And here, leaving him for a time, we will return to Padua. *Par parenthèse*, the "Chauvinismus" concerning stranger jealousy hardly applies to England: she was the explorer's second mother; and his enemies were his own countrymen.

In 1866, when Padua exchanged the "Eagle with Two Heads displayed" for the plain Cross Argent of Savoy, sundry patriotic citizens addressed a petition to the municipality, praying that the name of the *contrada* be changed from the ignoble "dei Paolotti" to the noble "Belzoni." The request was disregarded, probably for the usual reason; it did not emanate from the fountain of all civic honour—the town-hall. The experiment is to be tried again, under circumstances which ought to, and which I hope will, ensure success. The Riviera (quay) Santa Sofia, formerly a fetid canal, one of the many veinlets of the Bacchaglione, has

\* Bull., *Egypt. Geog. Soc.*, No. 6, Nov. 1879.

just lost name and nature; the ground, a large oblong, will be planted with trees (*Eucalyptus*!), and it would start well in life under the honoured name of PIAZZALE BELZONI.

The necessary measures are being taken by Giovanni Dr. Tomasoni, of Udine, a man of property, who has travelled round the world. He holds, by-the-by, with Mesnier (1874), against Gray (1875), that the Bonze in strange costume, short cloak and flat cap, who appears in the Buddhist temple of the "Five Hundred Genii" at Canton, is not Shiem-Tchu, a Hindu saint, but a western man, and consequently Marco Polo.\*

The first step will be to name the Square; the second, to raise a Monument. Something provisional might be set up, in the shape of a wooden pyramid, till subscriptions justify a formal statue. As this charge could not fairly be imposed on the municipality, an appeal should be made to public generosity. Padua has now many wealthy sons, and we may hope that they will practically disprove the imputation of *materialismo*. Let us also hope that the statue will be realistic;—will show the explorer in working garb, not habited like a Turk, a courtier, or a Hercules.

## II.

### BELZONI IN BENIN.

Before landing the explorer on the edge of the Dark Continent, it is advisable to cast a short glance at Africa, in connection with England, during the first quarter of our century. The "African Association," which became (1831) the "Royal Geographical Society," was formed in June, 1788. It began by sending out Ledyard, one of the Cook's circum-navigators, who was killed by fever in "Sennaar,"—properly Si (water) n (of) and Arti (the Island)=Water Island. Followed Lucas; but this well-qualified traveller returned, *re infecto*, to the north coast. Next went the gallant Major Houghton, to be plundered and left to starve among the Arabs of Ludamar (Wuld Omar) in the Great Desert (1791). Then came upon the stage that famous Mungo Park, whose charming volumes, I believe, owe most of their charm to Brian Edwards, of Jamaica. The Scotch surgeon's first and ever memorable march was made in 1795–97, and the fatal second in 1805. Herr Hornemann, of Göttingen, set out from Cairo in 1798; became, it is supposed, a Marabut or Santon in Káshná; and disappeared about 1803. Roentgen was murdered near Mogador in 1809. Adams, alias Benjamin Rose, assured the Association that in 1810 he had visited "Timbuctoo," or, properly, *Tin-bukhtu*, the "Well of Bukhtu." The same place was reached, in 1815, by James Riley, supercargo of the American brig *Commerce*, who brought back authentic details concerning the then

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\* Lecture of February 20, 1877. Mr. Archdeacon Gray's *Walks in the City of Canton* was printed at Hong Kong. It supports the Hindu claims in pp. 207–8 and 217.

mysterious course of the Niger. Captain Tuckey, R.N., commanding a Government expedition, lost himself and most of his companions by Congo fever and calomel, in 1816. During the same year, Major Peddie died at the beginning of his march on the Rio Nunez; and Major Campbell, his second in command, at Kakundy, in the next, June 13, 1817. Captain Gray (1818-19) returned safe from a trip to the Upper Gambia. Major Laing (1821-22) fixed the sources of the Niger, which he did not reach, in N. latitude 9°.\* He was murdered during a second expedition in 1826, and evil reports, probably false, connected his death with the French explorer Caillié. The expedition of Ritchie and Lyon ended disastrously, by the death of its chiefs, in November, 1819. Lastly, Denham and Clapperton began their memorable exploration in 1820, and returned in January, 1825.

During this interval, Belzoni again presented himself before the British public. The reports concerning "Timbuctoo" had only whetted general curiosity; and the factitious importance with which the march by "long Desert," and the "treachery of the Moors," had invested that uninteresting place, lasted till the visit of my late friend Barth in 1853. The nineteenth century moves apace. In 1879 the French are proposing an impossible railway from Algiers to the ex-capital of Negroland;—the chief inducement being, evidently, to cut out *ces Anglais*.

The Italian explorer had much in his favour. His gigantic strength was unimpaired; and he had recruited his health by three years of beef-steaks and beer. He had acquired the habit of command; and he was well acquainted with colloquial Arabic. His economies and the liberality of his friends supplied him with the sinews of travel. The well-known Briggs Brothers, of London and Alexandria, lent him 200*l.* On the other hand his forty-five years were against him: Africa, like the persons alluded to by Byron, ever

Prefers a spouse whose age is short of thirty.

Belzoni began by visiting Tangier, where, foiled by the suspicions of the Moors and the Jews, he failed to reach Fez. He now changed his plans, and very sensibly made his will (May 20, 1823) before entering Central Africa, the "grave of Europeans." He divided his property into three parts—the recipients being his mother, "Teresa Belzoni," or "Bolzoni;" another Theressa, the daughter of his deceased brother Antonio; and his wife Sarah. This done, he embarked at Mogador, touched at

\* I proposed to explore the sources in 1860-65; but the late Dr. Baikie agreed with me that *le jeu ne valait pas la chandelle*. My friend Winwood Reade was not successful in 1869. The head of the Joliba ("Great River") has just been reached by MM. Tweifel and Moustier, *employés* in the house of M. Verminch, of Sierra Leone. They ascended the Rokelle, passed the Kong Mountains and Falaba town with some difficulty; and, guided by Major Laing's map, found the main source on the frontier of Kissi and Koranka, some 200 miles from the "Lion's Range." What was our "Royal Geographical Society" doing?

Cape Coast Castle, and landed in the Bight of Benin. He seems to have "divined" the Niger outlet. There were many "theoretical discoverers," especially my friend the late James M'Queen; but the question was not practically settled till Richard and John Lander dropped down the Nun, or direct stream, to the Atlantic mouth, in 1830.

"Benin," or "Binnin"—by the natives called "Ibini," "Bini," or "Ini,"—held her head high amongst African kingdoms during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In our age the name has fallen into disuse, and few know anything beyond the fact that she lies somewhere in West Africa. According to early explorers, the length (north to south) was 80 by 40 leagues of depth. John Barbot\* increases these figures to 300 by 125, and makes the northern limit "Ardra," now Dahoman, which he identifies with the classical *Aranga mons* on the South Ethiopic Ocean.

Benin was discovered by the Portuguese, of whom old Willem Bosman politely says, "They served for setting dogs to spring the game which was seized by others." The explorer was Joam Afonso de Aveiro,† and the date 1485, one year after Diogo Cam had begun that conquest of the Congo which has lately been completed by Mr. Henry M. Stanley. Men were enthusiasts in those days. Fernan' de Pô (Fernando Po) called his trouvaille *A Ilha Formosa* (Fair Isle); and the Benin River became *O Rio Formoso*, or Fermoiso,—an older form,—but not Formosa, the feminine. In our times the British mariner sings,—with variants:—

The Bight of Benin! the Bight of Benin!  
One comes out where three goes in.

The natives know the stream-mouth as *Uwo ko Jakri*, or "Outlet of Jakri," the latter being African for the European Wari, Owari, Awerri, Ouueri, Owhyeré, or Ovare, a petty principedom on the southern fork. The late Mr. Beecroft, H. M.'s Consul for Fernando Po, proved (1840) by a cruise in the *Ethiope* steamer that this Wari branch leaves the Niger a little below Abu or Ibu town. Consequently the Rio Formoso is the Western arm of the Delta, whose hypotenuse measures some 180 miles.

The "Missioner" soon took Benin in hand. Aveiro brought home a "Mouf" (Ambassador) from the King, praying to be supplied with reverend men and ghostly meals. The Capuchin, Father Jerom Merolla da Sorrento,‡ tells us a pleasant story how Father Angelo Maria per-

\* This "Agent-General of the Royal African Company" treats especially of Benin in book iv. chap. 5, and his brother James continued the work from 1682 to 1699.

† He was factor of the then Dutch Elmina on the Gold Coast during the terminal quarter of the last century. His twenty-first letter treats of the "Kingdom of Benin;" and his valuable work was translated in 1705.

‡ He wrote about 1680 his *Voyage to Congo and several other Countries, chiefly in Southern Africa*. His work, which is minute and valuable, was first "made English from the Italian" in Churchill's Collection (i. 521). I borrow from Pinkerton (vol. xvi.), and hope to republish the book with the good aid of the Hakluyt Society.

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suaed a "white young lady" of St. Thomas Island to a peculiar act of self-devotion. She travelled to Benin, and, "being arrived at the King's palace, she was received by that monarch like another Rachel by Jacob, Esther by Ahasuerus, or Artemisia by Mausolus, and afterwards married by him after the Christian fashion; thereby giving a good example to his subjects, who soon forsook their former licentious principles and submitted to be restrained by the rules of the Gospel; that is, were all married according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church." This much-suffering young person sacrificed herself to very little purpose. During the seventeenth century Benin, like Congo, was overrun by a little army of "Apostolic Missioners;" who had, however, more care for their fees of slaves than for cures of souls: they meddled and they muddled, and they conducted themselves generally, to judge by their own accounts, in a way which would have secured deportation at the hands of downright Mr. John Dunn.

By slow degrees Christianity withered on its uncongenial soil. The Portuguese, who had begun work at Benin under D. Joam II., struck work under D. Joam III. During the latter part of the last century only a few half-caste traders and slavers from St. Thomas kept up churches and lodges at the chief settlements. In 1862 I found a trace of the faith in one place only, Wari- or Jakri-town; a tall cross still bore a bronze crown of thorns nailed to the centre, and a rude M(aria ?) of the same material was fastened to the lower upright. Singularly strange and misplaced was this emblem, rising from a grass thicket surrounded by a wall of the densest jungle, with a typical dead tree in front. Native huts here and there peeped over the bush; and hard by stood the usual Juju or fetish-house, a dwarf shed of tattered matting garnished with a curtain of white calico soiled and rusty. Truly a suggestive type of the difficulties with which the Cross had to contend in lands where Nature runs riot, and where the mind of man is rank as its surroundings;—difficulties against which it has fought a good fight, but hitherto without the crown. Hard by the cross was a mound of solid earth, whose tread suggested that it was a place of sepulture. Of these reverend men, these Nigerian martyrs, it may be truly said, "Time hath corroded their epitaphs and buried their very tombstones." Not a sign of burial appeared save a bit of blanched and weathered skull. Yet they are not to be pitied. They laboured through life at a labour of love, expecting the pleasing toil to end in eternal repose. And the good which they did lives after them;—at Wari I saw none of the abominations of Great Benin and Dahomey.

Upon the heels of the "Apostolic Missioner" came the merchant, who was mostly a slave-dealer. Now our eye-witnesses and authorities become Bosman and Barbot, who give copious accounts of the country and country folk. All the principal European nations, Portuguese, Dutch, English, and French, at one time had *comptoires*; and all failed in consequence of the mosquitos, the fever, and the utter rascality, the compli-

cated dishonesty, of the people, or rather peoples. The celebrated botanist (A. M. F. J.), Palisset de Beauvais, here passed upwards of a year (1786) in collecting materials for his *Flore d'Oware et de Benin*. In 1788 Capitaine Landolphe founded near the river mouth for the *Compagnie d'Owhyé* a fort and factory which he called Borodo ; this establishment lasted till 1792, and died of the Great Revolution. In these days a few English houses, Messrs. Horsfall, Harrison, Stewart and Douglas, and others, have settlements near the estuary, and take palm-nuts in barter for English goods. The export slave trade is totally stopped, to the manifest injury of the slave, who was once worth eighty dollars, and now hardly as many sixpences. Nothing, however, would be easier than to run a dozen cargoes of *casimir noir* out of the Benin river.

The ethnological peculiarity of Great Benin, as noted by all travellers, is the contrast between a comparative civilisation and an abominable barbarity. The capital which Bosman and Barbot call Oedo (Wedo) had in 1800 a circumference of six leagues ; and of the thirty main streets some stretched two miles long and twenty feet wide. All were kept in a remarkable state of cleanliness,—a virtue little known to Europe in those days,—because “every woman sweeps her own door.” At levees the prince sat upon an ivory couch under a silken canopy ; and on his left hand, against a fine tapestry, stood “seven white scoured elephant’s teeth” on pedestals of the same material. The palace also contained large stables for horses ; an article of luxury which has almost died out. The nobles bore the titles of Homograns (*homens grandes*) or grandees, and below them were the Mercadores and Fiadores (sureties or brokers). Yet the city was a Golgotha, an *Aceldama*, and Barbot exclaims in the bitterness of his heart and nose :—

The fiends their sons and daughters they  
Did offer up and slay :  
Yea, with unkindly murthering knife  
The guiltless blood they spilt ;  
Yea, their own sons’ and daughters’ blood  
Without all cause of guilt.—PSALM lv. 35-38.

The “grand customs” on the death of a “King” were, and are, essentially different in detail from those of Dahome. Yet the underlying idea is the same. Majesty must not enter Hades, Ghost-home, the Shadowy Land, without regal pomp and circumstance. The body is lowered into a deep pit ; and the most beloved domestics of both sexes, who highly prize the honour, take their places above it. The mouth of the hollow is then closed with a large stone, and crowds of mourners sit around it night and day. Next morning certain officers, told off for the purpose, open the pit and ask the set question, “Have ye found the king ?” (i.e. in Deadman’s-land). Those alive answer by telling how many of their number had perished of hunger and cold. This “strange-fantastical ceremony” is sometimes continued for five or six days. When at last no sound comes from below, the lieges make a great feast, and

spend the night running about the streets, chopping off heads and dragging off the corpses, which are thrown into the pit before its final closing. Besman, in the normal chapter on "Manners and Customs," notices the "ridiculous religion" and the frequent "apparition of ghosts of deceased ancestors,"—in fact, full-blown Spiritualism. But, like the men of his day, he never for a moment suspects that anything lies beneath the surface.

In May, 1838, Messrs. Moffat and Smith,\* surgeons on board a merchant schooner, went to the city of Great Benin, wishing to open, or rather to re-open, trade. The latter, a "very promising young man," died of a dysentery caught by being drenched with rain. They were horrified to see a trench full of bodies at which the turkey-buzzards were tugging, and "two corpses in a sitting position." These victims had probably been despatched with a formal message, announcing the arrival of strangers to the King's father in Ghost-land. The same unpleasant spectacle was offered in August, 1862, when I visited Benin, accompanied by Lieutenant Stokes, of H.M.S. *Bloodhound*, and Dr. Henry.† In the tall rank herbage, on the right of the path leading into the city, appeared the figure of a fine young man bare to the waist, with arms extended and wrists fastened to a scaffold framework of peeled wands, poles and stakes planted behind him. For a moment we thought that the wretch might be alive: a few steps convinced us of our mistake. He had been crucified after the African fashion, seated on a rough wooden stool, with a white calico cloth veiling the lower limbs. Between the ankles stood an uncouth image of yellow clay, concerning which the frightened natives who accompanied us would not speak. A rope of liiana, in negro-English called a "tie-tie," bound tight round the neck to a stake behind, had been the immediate cause of death. The features still showed strangulation, and the sacrifice was so fresh that, though the flies were there, the turkey-buzzards had not found the eyes. The blackness of the skin and the general appearance proved that the sufferer was a slave. No emotion whatever, save holding the nose, was shown by the crowds of Beninese, men and women, who passed by; nor was there any expression of astonishment when I returned to sketch the victim.

It is some comfort to think that the murder was committed with as much humanity as possible. These messengers to Ghost-land are always made to drink off a bottle of rum before the fatal cord is made fast. In one point, indeed, I found the Beninese superior to their neighbours. Twin births are esteemed good omens, not bestial and unnatural productions; and the mother receives a royal bounty like the happy parents of triplets and quartets in England. Beyond this nothing can be said in favour of Great Benin. The town has a fume of blood; it literally stinks of death. Without any prepossessions for "Humanitarian policy," and far from owning that Proselytism has succeeded, or ever will suc-

\* "A Visit to the Capital of Benin in the Delta of the Kwárá or Niger," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, 1841, vol. xi. pp. 190–192.

† "My Wanderings in West Africa," *Fraser's Magazine*, March, 1863.

ceed, in this part of Africa, I could not but compare once more the difference between Abeokuta, where there are missionary establishments, and Benin, which for years has remained a fallow field. In the former, human sacrifice still flourishes; but it is exceptional, it is done *sub rosa*, and it does not shock public decency by exposing the remnants of humanity. In the latter it is a horror—*teste* “Fraser.”

This unpleasant city was Belzoni’s first objective. He had engaged a homeward bound sailor, a negroid from Káshná, who had served on board H.M.S. *Owen Glendower*, as his companion to “Timbuctoo,” *via* Haussa. Thus he hoped to open a way through one of the most dangerous corners of the Dark Continent. A similar attempt was made in our day by the unfortunate Jules Gérard, the *Chasseur* (afterwards *Tueur*) *du Lion*. Whilst his relations live I hesitate to tell the true tale of his death.

Belzoni was not a general favourite in Egypt. He had placed himself in a false position, and he seemed to suffer under a chronic irritation and suspiciousness. He complained of “atrocious persecutions”; he found fortune “barbarous and unkind,” and he left Egypt “prematurely,” his plans being incomplete. In Africa it was otherwise. The skippers, supercargoes, and agents, popularly termed “Palm-oil lambs” (of the Nottingham breed), rough-mannered, kindly-hearted men, soon learned to love their guest as a friend. With affectionate adieux he took leave of them, was rowed up stream and landed at Gwato. Bosman calls this village “Agatton;” he tells us that it ranked in importance after Boededoe (Obobi),\* and Arebo, Arbon, Egro, New-town or Youngtown. “It was formerly a considerable place, but hath suffered much by the wars; it is situate on a small hill in the river; and it is a day’s journey by land to the city of Great Benin.” Barbot describes “Gotton” as a very large town, much more pleasant and healthy than its two rivals.” The country is full of all sorts of fruit trees, and well furnished with several little villages, whose inhabitants go thither to the markets, which are held at Gotton for five days successively. He places it twelve leagues S.S.E. of the capital. Messrs. Moffat and Smith make “Gatto or Agatto” twenty miles to the S.W. (read S.S.W.). I have noticed “Gwato” at some length, as here Belzoni was fated to find a grave.†

The explorer was kindly received by Obbá (King) Oddi or Odállá, father of Jámbrá, *alias* Atolo, whom I visited. In 1862 many of the oldsters at Benin remembered the traveller; and talked admiringly of his huge black beard, his gigantic strength, and his mighty stature,—six feet six. Everything was looking well, when the bad water of the city, taken from holes and polluted wells, brought on a dysentery, and the explorer was no longer young. In those days African fever was treated with the lancet, which still names our leading Medical Journal. Dysentery had the benefit of calomel, opium, laudanum, and oleum ricini,

\* p. 138, *Fraser*, February, 1863, and p. 275, March, 1863.

† p. 277, *Fraser*, March, 1863.

the latter a poison in those lands. Here let me observe that the anti-diarrhoea pill in the Crimean campaign was fully as fatal as the Russian bullet. When Nature is relieving the engorged liver, Art slips in and prevents the cure. Instead of meat-broths to support the strength, paps and gruels are given to sour the stomach; in fact the treatment was, and generally is, that best calculated to ensure fatal results.

Belzoni was too ill to take leave of the King, who sent him a kindly message. On the morning of November 28 (1823) he told Captain John Hodgson, of the brig *Providence*, who had run up to see him, that the hand of death was upon him. On December 2, with his usual good sense, he begged to be carried to Gwato and thence to "Bobee" (Obobi), hoping much from the sea air. Mr. Hodgson in his ignorance unwillingly consented, and despatched him in a rough palanquin accompanied by Mr. Smith; he himself intended to rejoin the sufferer at Gwato, whence the vehicle was to be sent back. At the end of the march the disease seemed to take a favourable turn; and the explorer was well enough to eat some bread and drink a cup of tea. Before leaving Benin city he disposed of his belongings. He ordered all the objects worthy of a passage to be sent to England by the brig *Castor* of Liverpool. He wrote a few lines to Messrs. Briggs; and, being unable to hold a pen, he sent his ring to his wife, with an expression of lively affection and loving memory.

At 4 A.M. on the next day (December 3), the explorer awoke with swimming head, cold extremities, and eyes expressing delirium. He was strong enough to swallow a little arrowroot, but not to speak. At 2.45 P.M. he passed away, apparently without pain. Mr. Hodgson, reaching Gwato at 4 P.M., found that the body had been laid out by Mr. Smith. He went to the local Cabocean, or Governor, and obtained leave to bury his dead "at the foot of a very large tree." Under its broad foliage a grave was dug six feet deep, and at 9 P.M. the corpe was buried with all the honours. Mr. Hodgson read the funeral service, and his eighteen men, headed by himself and Mr. Smith, saluted with three salvos of musketry his guest's tomb. Sundry guns were fired by the vessels in port, the schooner *Providence*, the American *Curlew*, and the *Castor*. Mr. W. Fell, supercargo of the latter, caused his carpenter to prepare a tablet with an inscription noting the day of death, and expressing the pious hope that all European travellers who may visit the last home of the intrepid and enterprising traveller, will be pleased to clear the ground, and to repair the ring fence if necessary.

Such is the official and received account of the explorer's death. Local tradition declares that Belzoni was carried to the house of Ogéa, Cabocean (Governor) of Gwato. This man, described as a tall negroid of yellow complexion and uncanny look, died about 1850. He is said to have poisoned the traveller in hopes of plunder; and what lends colour to the charge is that he afterwards tried the same trick upon a European trader, and failed. The chief of Gwato, "Kusei"—also, by the by, a noted

poisoner,—popularly known as “the Parson” (here an old title, hereditary and connected with the local religion), declared to me, among others, that many of Belzoni’s papers were handed over by Ogéa to the royal *Fiador*, or broker, and that since the latter’s death they descended to his son. Stray leaves have been seen, according to European testimony, in the hands of the townspeople, leading to the conclusion that there are more behind. Mr. Sharpe, a late agent to Messrs. Horsfall, made a liberal bid for these documents; but without result. I was equally unfortunate, although I offered a bale of cloth=20*l*.

Belzoni’s grave has been allowed, despite the epitaph, to drop out of sight. Staff Surgeon W. F. Daniell \* described it as an “elevated mound of earth overrun with weeds, with the fragments of a decayed wooden cross.” Messrs. Moffat and Smith found the “grave of the traveller Belzoni marked by a wooden tablet fast going to decay.” In 1862, when I saw it, the place had become a *tabula rasa*.

The site of the sepulchre was pointed out to me near the Governor of Gwato’s house, to the south-east of the village. “Belzoni’s tree” is a fine spreading growth, which bears a poison apple, and whose boughs droop nearly to the ground. A little plantation of the Koko-yam (*Colocasia*) clothes the sides of the low mound from which the trunk springs, and a few huts and sheds stand between it and “the bush.” It is a pretty and romantic spot.

I assembled the village ancients, and made a desultory attempt at digging under their vague and discordant directions. But time was short, a fight was brewing, and African growths cover double and treble the area of our largest English. I was obliged to content myself with sketching Belzoni’s tree, with sending home a handful of wild flowers, and with expressing a hope that “some European passing by” would be more fortunate than myself.†

In 1865 I left Fernando Po, a locality famed for the rapid consumption of Europeans generally, and especially of English Consuls. Two of my successors have succumbed to the climate; and now there is a third applicant for the honourable, but ticklish, duty of representing the British Government. I can only hope that Mr. Consul E. H. Hewett will carry out a project of mine, foiled by circumstances; and will recover for the good city of Padua, which rejoices in the apocryphal relics of Antenor and of Livy, the mortal remains of her right worthy son Giovanni Battista Belzoni.

RICHARD F. BURTON.

\* *Sketches of the Nautical Topography (&c.) of the Gulf of Guinea.*

† p. 28, *Fraser*, March, 1863.

## Studies in Kentish Chalk.

NATURE lends no countenance to the dictum of Dr. Johnson that one green field is like another. Monotonous uniformity is not to be found in her least or greatest handiwork. While there are no hard and fast lines of demarcation between her geographical divisions, she has set certain broad marks of distinction upon their face which a little experience enables her students to note and recognise. It would scarcely be too much to affirm that the eye of a trained observer, at the first aspect of a new tract of country, can pronounce whether the soil be chalk, sand, or clay, what are its common native products, and what is the quality of the landscape in point of beauty. An expert in English chalk-scenery, at all events, may safely rely upon his powers of clairvoyance to distinguish its familiar features wherever he travels. There is no mistaking the *indicia* of that landscape when once thoroughly known. The gradual process by which such knowledge is acquired can no more be communicated than the pleasure which it brings. It is always true of Nature that

You must love her ere to you  
She will seem worthy of your love.

All that can be done towards training another's eye is to throw out a few hints which may help it to observe for itself. No easier school for a novice can be suggested than the Kentish chalk-lands, and the following rough notes of their prevailing characteristics may serve, *faute de mieux*, as a skeleton chart for his guidance. The area is a large one, but the district more particularly referred to is its most picturesque section, with which the writer happens to be best acquainted.

A condition prevenient for the true enjoyment of a country such as this is that one should be an active walker. "The proud ones who in their coaches roll along the turnpike-road" can form but the most meagre idea of its variety and beauty. Even the horseman will be unable to penetrate many a recess specially haunted by its charm. It offers, however, no perilous pleasures to the mountaineer. Soundness of wind and limb, and a healthy contempt of dust or mud, according to the weather, are alone sufficient to qualify you as a walking tourist. At whatever season of the year you may take your first view of this landscape, the feature which will thrust itself upon your notice before all others is the uniform roundness of the outlines. The hills bear upon them the stamp of their aqueous origin. Gradually narrowing upwards from the base with a gentle acclivity, their slopes and crests are smooth; the former often vertically scored by the flow of water into deep central depressions,

which attaches more or less to every succession of hills and valleys; the massive steadfastness of the one and the lowly reliance of the other apparently combining to produce that impression upon the mind. It is heightened in the present case by the sense of solitude. Thanks to the value of the land for corn and fruit culture, and the unwillingness of the owners to part with it for building sites, few districts within the same distance of the metropolis are so thinly peopled. The wearied Londoner who has had the fortune to discover this, will not be ungrateful for the boon. Along many a mile of these uplands he will meet with no fellow creature other than rabbit, squirrel, or bird, and may find a score of rocks wherein to dream away a summer's day with the certainty of being undisturbed.

Within living memory this district was wooded to a much greater extent than now. Such woodland tracts as remain lie upon the crests and in the hollows of the hills, or belt the valley-roads. The characteristic trees of the uplands are the beech, thorn, and yew; of the lowlands the elm and the ash; but horse-chestnut, lime, maple, birch, sycamore, and rowan grow freely also. In places on the hills where there may be a little admixture of soil—a raised beach of water-worn stones or a strip of peaty heath attesting the presence of gravel or sand—Scotch firs and other conifers grow; and even without this aid the larch will thrive. The oak and Spanish chestnut take less kindly to the country, often indeed attaining a vast girth, but usually being stunted in height. The beech is the real monarch of our hillside woods, majestic alike in stature and development of trunk and limb. The thorns seldom reach to any great size, but often assume with age a fantastic gnarliness that reminds one of the olive. The yews, which are found for the most part on the ridges above the roads, were planted, as tradition has it, to guide mediæval pilgrims on their way to the shrine of St. Thomas at Canterbury. Several are doubtless coeval with the days of pilgrimage, and some of the finest specimens crown the steep highway between Otford and Wrotham, which goes by the special name of "the Pilgrim's road." The yew's common habit of throwing its strength into the top, leaving the trunk bare, sometimes produces an umbrella-like shape that, encouraged by art, makes it a prominent landmark. The elm is foremost among the lowland trees, and reaches its full height. Some of the valley-roads are lined with it on either side, and the arching boughs interlace overhead like the groined roof of a cathedral nave. The lime is less lofty, though of ample girth, but is apt to develop an unhealthy fibrous growth midway round its trunk, disfiguring its symmetry. The ash and willow which, with the alder, fringe the river-banks, are seldom left to grow naturally, but pollarded periodically for the sake of their branches.

More characteristic of the chalk-land than its trees are its hedge-row shrubs and underwood. In striking contrast with the sombre, unvarying foliage of the yews upon the hill-crests are their ordinary

companions, the wayfaring and service trees, whose leaves change from a spring vesture of grey-green, with white under-sides laid bare by every breeze, to an autumn robing of russet; and whose clusters of milky bloom give place either to glossy berries that pass from pale-green to pink, onwards to crimson, and thence to black, or to bunches of mealy fruit that ripen from green to red and brown. Scarcely less abundant are the dog-wood, with its ruddy stems, pointed leaves that change from green through purple to crimson, and dense black berries; and the spindle-tree, whose small leaves and whitish-green blossoms may escape attention in summer, but which "in our winter woodland looks a flower," with its waxen, three-sided, and rose-coloured seed-vessels. Mingled with them in ample variety are holly, privet, hawthorn, maple, willow, hornbeam, hazel, elder, eglantine, woodbine, blackthorn, bramble, and all the commoner native shrubs, each beautiful in its own phases of growth if allowed to mature. This freedom is too seldom enjoyed, owing to the immoderate zeal with which our Kentish farmers carry out their praiseworthy aim of securing as much light and air as possible for their crops. The ruthless forays which they periodically make upon the hedgerows to denude them of all but the barest screen of foliage, have the doubly disastrous effect of depriving a soil already too dry of its natural reservoir of moisture, and the landscape of a special grace. When one of these hedgerows has the good fortune to remain untouched all the year through, it offers an inexhaustible study of form and colour. From earliest spring its green, yellow, and crimson leaf-buds are eloquent in promise, and the coldest March does not pass without an earnest of fulfilment in the white blossoms put forth by the blackthorn's leafless stems, or the golden pollen shed from the swallow-palm. With April and May come the bevy of white-flowering shrubs, hawthorn, Guelder, wayfaring tree, service, and dogwood, preceded and followed by leaves which traverse the scale of green through its numberless shades, save those which, like the maple's, are scarlet-tipped, or, like the sapling oak's, are stained throughout with crimson. Summer perfects the development of the leaves and deepens their tints; gives free scope to the hop, bryony, bindweed, and other climbing plants which riot in a profuse tangle of tendrils; and withers the flowers of spring only to replace them by its own, shell-pink or pearl-white chalices of eglantine, creamy yellow whorls of woodbine, masses of milky privet, starry clusters of clematis, and trumpet-mouths of convolvulus. As the season draws to a close, the hedgerow's "young wood," the product of the last three months, puts forth its foliage, whose fresher green recalls the memory of its vernal prime, yet with a foretaste of autumn in the sombre shading. The maple's outermost leaves are now half or wholly crimsoned instead of scarlet-tipped, and the ruddy purple tinge assumed by the sapling oak is shared in varying measure by the latest shoots of ash and hazel. Autumn fulfils and multiplies the pageant of colour; stimulating the woodbine and at times the eglantine to a second bloom; graduating the

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passage of the green leaf to its death by every possible change of yellow, brown, and gold until it reaches the tint for which our old writers could find no apter epithet than *philomot* (*feuille morte*) ; and lingering out the metamorphosis of the berry from orange to scarlet or crimson, and from indigo to black. Winter, which annuls so much that is pleasant to the eye, does not wholly deprive us of these glories, often prolonging to the last the deep russet of the beech and oak, bringing out into fuller relief the glossy purple of the bare birch stems, and sparing many a bramble-spray splashed with blood-red streaks, a holly-bush unstripped of its coral beads, or hoary filament of the clematis with its pathetic resemblance to the symbol of human decay. Thus no seasonal lapse passes over the hedgerow without bringing to those who care to seek for it some fresh picture of exquisite detail in broad or minute contrasts.

The bank which the hedge surmounts, though still more dependent for its beauty upon

The daughters of the year,  
Each garlanded with her peculiar flower,

is happily less liable to ravage. If comparatively few plants and flowers are exclusively found upon the chalk, the abundant variety of its products, and the quick succession of their blossoms and tints, together with the absence of some and the rarity of other species which are common elsewhere, constitute sufficiently distinctive characteristics. Only one other soil in any part of England known to the present writer—the sandstone rock of Waterdown Forest in Sussex—is more variously and richly flowerful. As early as February, if the season be ordinarily mild, primroses and violets push their leaves and buds through the sere grass, the arum (or wake-robin) begins to lift its scroll, and the cleaver its whorl. From March to May the floral succession is swiftest. Violets—white, lavender, and purple, scented and scentless—are the first-comers; primroses follow closely, and in greater abundance. True to her virginal character, the Spring clothes herself above every other season with pale or delicate-tinted flowers, and foremost of these are anemones white and pink, the stichwort, and the strawberry. Still later come the speedwell with its “darling blue,” the celandine, buttercup, dandelion, and avens, all yellow, the latter (which, on account of its virtue as a simple, our forefathers called the herb Bennet) having a crimson eye; then the hyacinth, dark and light blue, and the skull-cap in endless varieties of tint from palest pink to deepest purple. Between June and August these give place to the yellow-green mignonette, scarlet and crimson poppies, white, bladder, and rose campions, the lesser stichwort, the crane’s-bill, herb Robert, or wild geranium, with rose-pink blossoms and lace-like leaves, white marguerite daises, lilac, purple, occasionally white scabious, the sky-blue cornflower, yellow and white toad-flax, with its tongue of bright orange, white cow-parsley and hemlock, crimson and purple thistles, frail blue harebells, golden St. John’s wort and sun-daisies, the scarlet pimpernel, or shepherd’s weather-glass,

and the mallow, for whose peculiar blending of red and blue no name has been found but its own. With the advent of autumn this succession begins to fail, but the night-shade, teazle, and several varieties of the mint tribe maintain the prevalence of purple which characterises the season, and many of the summer flowers linger until the setting in of winter. Even then the despised nettle, with its graceful umbels of white or yellow blossoms, is often hardy enough to defy the frost. When the bank is deserted by every flower, it keeps one last attraction in its covering of ground-ivy, each of whose symmetrical sprays, with its dark-veined leaves, is a masterpiece of *chiaroscuro*.

Many of these flowers thrive still better under the shelter of the woods. During April and May the copses, especially those that have been cut a year or two previous, are literally carpeted with primroses, violets, anemones, and hyacinths. The strictly woodland flowers abound also : the wood-sorrel, with its perfect bright green trefoils and daintily pencilled white blossoms ; the woodruff, with its delicate whorls and small "enamelled" flowers, prized more in death than in life for their scent of new-mown hay ; the lily of the valley ; the wood-spurge, with its "cup of three," yellow-green in spring, bronze-red in autumn ; Solomon's seals ; the tall spikes of the viper's bugloss, the positive contrast of whose blue corolla and red stamens makes it strikingly attractive ; several varieties of orchis, of which the purple and crimson are the most common, the "green-man," fly, and bee being comparatively rare ; and the creeping jenny, which lights up the paths on summer evenings with its golden sconces set in an emerald framework. Other flowers are peculiar to the meadows, notably the lilac cuckoo-flower or lady's-smock, always to be found first, as Mr. Tennyson, most faithful of poetic naturalists, has not failed to observe, in "the meadow-trenches ;" white, sweet-scented saxifrage, ragged robin, and the splendid marsh marigolds, Shakspeare's marybuds, which cover the lowlands beside the river with a cloth of gold. In the same situation grow the rose-tinted dropwort with its white cross-shaped pistil, creamy meadow-sweet, and blue forget-me-not. Still closer to the verge of the stream rises the yellow iris, and upon its face float the white water-strawberry and golden water-lily.\*

\* How these names, as one enumerates them, confute the notion which, though high living authority has been cited for it, we cannot hesitate to call ignorant, that the loving study of natural beauty is a growth of modern time ! If the gold of poetry be ever embedded in the ore of language, the tender grace and truthful observation of our forefathers have surely been preserved for us in such names as speed-well, loose-strife, cuckoo-flower, wake-robin, forget-me-not, poor man's or traveller's joy, daisy (day's eye), shepherd's weather-glass, &c., &c. Many of the quaint resemblances which their eyes were quick to discover in these objects of their affection have lost their significance for ours. Dandelion (*dents de lion*) and foxglove (folk's or fairy's glove) convey no meaning to those who do not consider their etymology ; and we doubt if the likeness of the columbine's inverted blossom to a nest of doves (*columba*) has struck one modern observer out of a hundred. Miss Ingelow, so far as we remember, is the only English poet who has referred to it.

In their choice of habitat, as every naturalist knows, flowers are as capricious as the sex of which they are the accepted symbols ; and many not above enumerated are to be found in particular localities and nowhere else. The cowslip, plentiful enough on the downs of Sussex and the Isle of Wight, is somewhat rare here, except on the banks of the " Pilgrim's Road," where it grows abundantly. The columbine is to be met with only in a few retired woods and hillsides, and there develops its characteristic tendency to " sport " in colour and double its blossoms so luxuriantly as to deceive experts into taking it for a garden seedling. The foxglove confines itself likewise to a few favourite haunts, and the yellow broom which has given its name to one of our hills is seldom to be seen elsewhere. The Canterbury bell, so abundant at the edge of the Sussex downs, but now and then shows itself under ours. You may search high and low in vain for the sweet-briar rose unless you know exactly where to look ; and a small white variety of toad-flax is restricted to one solitary patch.

In grasses, ferns, and mosses these chalk-lands are less rich than some other soils, but the ordinary kinds flourish freely. The cereals must not be overlooked among the first-named, since in an agricultural district man's work has to be taken into account as modifying the conditions of natural beauty. The quality of the soil in the first place, and tradition in the second, have apparently dictated that white wheat should be more extensively grown here than any other variety of the grain. However splendid may be the harvest, it lacks the glowing lustre which flames from the sheaves of the red wheat on the clays and sands of Surrey and Sussex ; and the artist will more highly esteem it in an earlier stage, when its " thousand waves . . . ripple " over the broad uplands with an ineffable grace of curve. Looking on these fields when freshly ploughed, you would be apt to think there was no room for a blade to spring, so thickly are they strewn with flints, but visit them a few months later and you will see every interstice filled up and the surface mantling with green. The abundance of *silex* in the soil, so essential to the healthy growth of straw, renders ours of excellent substance. If the fields of barley and oats partake of the same coldness as the wheat, and the silver of the one be less sheeny, the gold of the other less mellow than elsewhere, the deficiency of colour is made up to us by the successional variety of other crops ; in spring by breadths of crimson trifolium and rose-pink sainfoin ; in summer by the pied-bean and white pea blossoms, the clear yellow of mustard and luzern, and the deep green, sprinkled with purple, of the tares ; in autumn by masses of pale-pink clover, potato-fields blossoming in white and purple, the shining leaves and ruddy stalks of the mangold. The sheep, for whose behoof most of these crops are grown, attest the fatness of the pasture by the quality of their wool, which is highly prized, rather than of their mutton, which is inferior to that of the grass-fed Southdowns. Though the hop-gardens in some other parts of Kent are larger and more fruitful than ours, no situation is better fitted than these

hill-slopes to array their long avenues of golden-green leaves, hanging flower-clusters, and wanton tendrils. Every farmstead boasts its cherry, apple, or plum orchard, and the lane which connects it with the high road is usually bordered on each side by a row of bullace or damson trees. The April landscape offers no fairer picture than their wavy lines of milky bloom. Large tracts are devoted to the culture of "ground fruit," strawberries, raspberries, currants, and gooseberries, which, with a smaller supply of filberts, cobnuts, and walnuts, readily find their way to the London markets.

The soil of our flower-gardens is too rarely unmixed to afford any characteristic evidences, unless it be a tendency in the deeper shades of colour to become pale with the lapse of time. Even when the chalk remains native, however, it repays the labour of a generous and skilful hand, and no obstacles present themselves to the cultivation of any hardy tree, shrub, or flower that will grow in our latitude. The mean temperature, allowing for differences in altitude and exposure, is moderate both in heat and cold. Snow melts quickly except in sheltered spots on the hills. The water is too hard for some tastes, but singularly pure, as the analytical reports of the metropolitan water companies invariably attest. The air is fine, sweet, and bracing. Though liable, from its neighbourhood to the sea, to an occasional incursion of mist which enters through its river outlet, the soil breeds no fogs of its own, and a slight shifting of the wind suffices to disperse the invader. Only after long-continued rain does the ground become viscid, and is apt to lose its moisture but too quickly.

Passing over its human denizens, whose blood has mingled too long with that of other autochthons to retain any distinctive elements, it would be unpardonable not to say a word of the chalkland *fauna*. Like the flora, its characteristic consists as much in the rarity or absence of certain species commonly found on other soils as in the variety and abundance of those which it nurtures. The magpie and the jay, for example, of which the woods of Sussex and Surrey have only too many, are seldom seen in ours. The great woodpecker sometimes utters its strange laugh, but you may long listen in vain for the little woodpecker's "tapping." The red-start, another common bird in Surrey and Sussex, never or rarely visits us. On the other hand, the yellow-hammer, of which Surrey knows little, is our familiar guest. In song-birds, lark, linnet, thrush, blackbird, robin, blackcap, wren, and most of the finches, we are abundantly rich. The nightingale and cuckoo come early and linger late. Nor are the songless birds less numerous. Any summer's day you may hear the ceaseless "wrangling" of the daw, the clamour of the rooks, whose voices are only dissonant when single and richly harmonious in concert, the cushat's plaint, the ringdove's lullaby, the starling's fine whistle, the swallow's thin shriek, the whin-chat's fretful hack, the quaint call-note of the wry-neck, or the "human cry" of the plover; and any evening the nightjar's vibrant rattle, or the white owl's stertorous breathing.

A few rarer birds may now and then be seen by those who know their haunts ; the windhover hawk poising ere its swoop, a heron pursuing his leisurely flight towards the river, or a curlew sailing up from the marshes. A pair of ravens not long since built an annual nest in one of our parks, but of late years seem to have forsaken it. The birds and beasts of chase and warren find ample cover here, and breed as freely as they are suffered to do. Occasionally an otter is to be heard of beside the stream, but is ruthlessly pursued to death for the sake of the trout. No excuse but ignorance of its habits can be pleaded for the systematic destruction of the harmless hedgehog which, though still with us, will soon become as extinct as the badger. With true beasts of vermin, save those which sportsmen encourage, we are not greatly troubled, and from the pests of the reptile and insect worlds we enjoy comparative immunity. The adder, the hornet, the stag-beetle, and June bug, which abound on sandy soils, are here scarcely to be met with. The hop-gardens are infested with many peculiar enemies, but find a staunch defender in the ladybird. The worst foes of our flowers and vegetables are the wire-worm and the snail. A white variety of the latter attains immense size, and so much resembles the kind which the Southern French use for soup as to inspire a wish that it were equally edible. Bees thrive admirably on the sainfoin, clover, and other upland blossoms, and their honey fetches a high price. Thanks to the wide extent of the chalk *flora*, the collector of butterflies and moths finds constant occupation. No trout-stream within easy access of the metropolis is more favourably conditioned than that which flows through our principal valley, or seems to afford keener satisfaction to the angler. The trout-ova are said to be in particular request by the leading professor of English pisciculture. To one who, like the present writer, is not a sportsman, no other attraction should be needed than the stream itself. Now slow and tranquil, now swift and headstrong as it draws near to or falls from the weirs which span its channel ; at one moment flashing in the sunlight, at the next steeped in shadow ; overhung here by alders and willows, there bordered by watercress, forget-me-not, iris, and reed ; haunted by passing visions of kingfisher, moorhen, and water-rat, or stately processions of gliding swans, it ripples and babbles along its winding course with changeful grace of motion and ceaseless murmur of music.

H. G. H.

### Cimabue and Coal-scuffles.

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SOME months since I ventured to lay before the readers of the *CORNHILL MAGAZINE* certain reflections upon the Philosophy of Drawing-rooms, wherein I endeavoured, so far as my humble lights permitted me, to accommodate the transcendental Platonic archetype of a rational drawing-room to the practical necessities of a modern eight-roomed cottage. Thereupon I was immediately attacked and put to utter rout by a lively writer in one of our weekly journals. Into the main facts of our controversy ("si rixa et ubi tu pulsas, ego vapulo tantum") I cannot enter here. Doubtless, as in all controversies, there was a great deal to be said on both sides. But there was one little side issue which set me thinking seriously. My opponent urged, amongst other objections, that a room such as that which I described would cost a few thousand pounds to furnish and decorate, instead of the modest hundred which had formed my original estimate. Now, as it happened that my figures were founded on personal experience, I felt naturally anxious to discover the origin of this slight difference of opinion between us. It soon appeared that my critic's difficulty really consisted in the fact that his rôle was that of an artist and collector, while mine was the humbler one of a decorative upholsterer. When I spoke of Venetian glass, he did not suppose I could mean Dr. Salviati's or the San Murano Company's, but firmly though politely took his stand in the Venice of the Doges—the only Venice whose artistic existence he could bring himself in any way to recognise. The pretty hawthorn pattern porcelain he only knew in its priceless old Oriental form, and he refused even to acknowledge the solid reality, far less the beauty in shape and colour, of the lovely and daintily figured jar which now meets my eyes when I raise them from the sheet of foolscap on which I am at this moment writing the present paper. Yet I somehow cannot shake off my primitive belief that the jar in question actually does exist, and is just as exquisite in form and hue as if it could show a most undoubted pedigree from the venerable days of the Ming dynasty itself. As to Vallauris vases, those audacious attempts to debase the beautiful by offering it to the ignoble vulgar at a moderate charge of one shilling, my censor frankly confessed that he knew nothing at all about them. Ästhetic pleasure, he remarked quite clearly between his lines (if I read him aright), is and ought always to remain the special and peculiar prerogative of the class which can afford to buy Italian great masters and antique bric-à-brac at unreasonable prices.

I will candidly admit that I am not careful to answer him in this

matter. It seems to me an obvious truism that the beautiful is equally beautiful however much or however little it may cost, and that the lilies of the field, though every village child may pluck them, are yet arrayed in purer loveliness than King Solomon in all his glory. I was anxious to show how people of slender means might make their homes bright and pretty at a small expense, not to show how they might pick up old china at fabulously cheap prices. But the criticism raised some reflections in my mind, chiefly connected with Cimabue and coal-scuttles, which I thought might prove not wholly unprofitable to the readers of this magazine. The scope and the domain of art are at the present moment undergoing a revolutionary widening under our very eyes, and it is worth while to trace the previous history which has made this revolution possible or even inevitable. To put it briefly, we live in an age when the æsthetic interest is deserting Cimabue and fixing itself upon coal-scuttles.

Walking down an unlovely English street in a manufacturing town, with its crumbling, flat-fronted, dirty brick cottages, its ragged unkempt children playing in the dusty, grimy gutter, its slatternly hard-faced women, its hulking, ill-clad men, its thick atmosphere of smoke and fog,—one turns away in spirit to a village of Central African or Malayan savages, such as one sees it in the illustrations to Dr. Schweinfurth's or Mr. Wallace's books, with its neat, octagonal wattled huts, its large-leaved tropical plants, its breadth of air and roominess, its people fantastically decked out with bright blossoms, red ochre, quaintly tattooed decorations, and necklets of teeth or shells, all of which, however little they may happen to accord with our own notions of taste, show at least a decided love of æsthetic ornament on the part of their creators. When we contrast these two opposite poles of human life, we cannot help asking ourselves, Why has the progress of our European civilisation, such as it is, killed out in the mass of our population that native taste for the beautiful which is so conspicuous in the merest savages? How is it that in a country which spends hundreds of thousands upon Fra Angelicos and Botticellis, upon Corots and Millets, upon Gainsboroughs and Burne Joneses, upon Assyrian bulls and Egyptian Pashts, upon South Kensington Museums and Albert Memorial monstrosities, nine-tenths of the people should still live perpetually in a state of æsthetic darkness and degradation far below that of the lowest existing savages, or even of the wild black-skinned hunters who chipped flints and carved mammoth ivory a hundred thousand years ago among the pre-glacial forests of the Somme and the Thames? Is it not extraordinary that side by side with our *Salons* and our Royal Academies, our Louvres and our Schools of Design, there should exist a vast squalid mass of humanity, leading unlovely lives in the midst of ugly and shapeless accessories which would arouse the contempt of a naked Naga or Bushman, and more careless of cleanliness or personal adornment than the fierce-jawed pre-historic savages of the palæolithic period?

I know most readers will imagine at the first blush that I am rhetorically exaggerating the contrast between the æsthetic barbarian and

our own utilitarian poor. But a little definite comparison will soon show that this language, strong as it is, does no more than represent the truth. Look, for example, at the most primary element in the love for beauty—I mean personal adornment. The women and children of the Seven Dials have uncombed and tangled hair, twisted perhaps into a rude knot at the back of the head with a few rusty hairpins. But the Fijians decorate themselves with the most elaborate and careful *coiffures*, in a variety of styles, from the plain but well-combed frizzy poll of the men to the infinite tiny plaits and curls of the native belles. About the beauty to European eyes of these headdresses we need say nothing. Some will find them becoming, while others will merely think them bizarre ; but in any case they show at least the pains which the Fijians take to satisfy their own standard of fashion and of aesthetic taste. Some of the *coiffures* require several days for their arrangement ; and when they have been successfully completed, the proud possessor sleeps with his neck on a sort of notched wooden pillow, his head being quite unsupported, so as to avoid disarranging the lofty artistic structure. In Tahiti and in the Hawaiian Islands, again, flowers in the hair, in wreaths, in garlands to hang about the body, and in every other conceivable shape, form the common ornament of men, women, and children. Every one who has read the delightful accounts of life in the Archipelagos of the Pacific given by Miss Bird, Mrs. Brassey, or Lord Pembroke, must have noticed the air of refinement and aesthetic culture thrown over the whole atmosphere of life amongst these half-reclaimed savages by the constant presence of crimson hibiscus, and scarlet poinsettia, and purple bougainvillea as inseparable adjuncts of even the most prosaic acts. But our own grown-up cottagers think an attention to wild flowers worthy only of children. Tattooing, once more, is not a practice in complete harmony with our old-world notions, and "society" in England was convulsed with a nine days' horror when a flying rumour reached it some months since that two young royal personages had been decorated with a broad arrow across their faces after the primitive fashion of the South Seas ; but very few people at home have ever noticed how exquisitely beautiful, when viewed by themselves, are most of the curved or symmetrical patterns used by the Maories for decorating their cheeks. Mr. Herbert Spencer has shown most conclusively that tattooing was originally adopted, not as an ornament, but as a mutilation or disfigurement, marking subjection to a conquering race ; and the way in which it has been gradually modified, so as to become at last purely aesthetic in purpose, is in itself a striking proof of high artistic feeling amongst the people who employ it. If we want further proof of such artistic feeling we have only to look at the exactly similar curves and patterns with which the Maories so exquisitely carve their war canoes and their paddles, their cocoa-nut drinking-cups, and their graceful clubs or *bâtons*, the Polynesian counterparts of the Homeric sceptres.

We might even go a step further back, perhaps, and draw a natural

inference from the respective personal appearance of the South Sea Islanders and the East End Londoners themselves. Mr. Darwin believes that the general beauty of the English upper class, and especially of the titled aristocracy—a beauty which even a hardened Radical like the present writer must frankly admit that they possess in an unusual degree—is probably due to their constant selection of the most beautiful women of all classes (peeresses, actresses, or wealthy bourgeoisie) as wives through an immense number of generations. The regular features and fine complexions of the mothers are naturally handed down by heredity to their descendants. Similarly it would seem that we must account for the high average of personal beauty amongst the ancient Greeks and the modern Italians by the high average of general taste, the strong love for the beautiful, diffused amongst all classes in both those races. The prettier women and the handsomer men would thus stand a better chance of marrying, other things equal, and of handing down their own refined type of face and figure to their children. If this be so—and evolutionists at least can hardly doubt it—then we should expect everywhere to find the general level of personal beauty highest where there was the widest diffusion of aesthetic taste. Now, our own squalid poor are noticeable, as a rule, for their absolute and repulsive ugliness, even when compared with those of other European countries. "La laideur," says M. Taine with truth, in his *Notes sur l'Angleterre*, "est plus laide que chez nous." Gaunt, hard-faced women, low-browed, bull-dog-looking men, sickly, shapeless children people the back slums of our manufacturing towns. Their painful ugliness cannot all be due to their physical circumstances alone; for the lazzaroni who hang about the streets of Naples must lead lives of about equal hardship and discomfort; yet many of them, both men and women, are beautiful enough to sit as models for a Leonardo. On the other hand, every traveller speaks in high admiration of the beauty and gracefulness displayed by young and old amongst the aesthetic Polynesians; while in many like cases I note that Europeans who have once become accustomed to the local type find decidedly pretty faces extremely common in several savage races whose primitive works of art show them in other ways to possess considerable aesthetic taste. In India, where artistic feeling is universal, almost every man or woman is handsome. On the whole, it seems to me fairly proved that the average personal beauty everywhere roughly corresponds to the average general love for beauty in the abstract.

Be this as it may, it is at least certain that most (if not all) existing or pre-historic savages take and have taken far more pains with their personal decoration than the vast mass of our own poor. The people of Bethnal Green, of the Black Country, and of the Glasgow or Liverpool hovels wear clothes or rags for warmth alone, and apparently without any care for their appearance, even on Sundays. But all savages paint themselves red with ochre, and blue with indigo or woad; they tattoo themselves with intricate patterns, which it takes days to trace out; they cover themselves with flowers and fern leaves; they gather ostrich plumes

or other feathers for their head-dresses ; they weave girdles, belts, and necklaces of feathers, cowries, wampum, or seeds ; they manufacture cloth with bright dyes and pretty patterns ; and they trade with European or Arab merchants for Turkey-red cotton, brilliant Venetian beads, and scarves or sashes of pure and delicate colours. I have waded through whole reams of literature on this subject, in print or manuscript, and I find missionaries and travellers almost universally, from Mr. Gifford Palgrave in the Philippine Islands to Mr. Whitmee in Samoa (in opposition to the general European idea), speak highly of savage taste in matters of dress. And when we go back even to the earliest wild men of the Stone Age, we learn from Professor Boyd Dawkins that they painted themselves red with oxide of iron, that they made themselves necklets of shells, bones, and fossils, and that they stitched together mantles of fur or feathers with a rude thread made from the sinews of deer.

If we compare the savage hut and its contents with the modern workman's cottage, the contrast becomes even more striking. Here our judgment is not disturbed by those wide fluctuations of fashion which make it difficult for us to appreciate the aesthetic intent of a tattooed New Zealand nose or a parti-coloured Ojibway forehead. The more a man studies savage art, the more is he struck by the almost universal good taste which it displays. Every chair, stool, or bench is prettily shaped and neatly carved. Every club, paddle, or staff is covered with intricate tracery which puts to shame our European handicraft. Every calabash or gourd is richly wrought with geometrical patterns or conventionalised floral and animal designs. The most primitive pottery is graceful in form and irreproachable in its simple ornament of string-courses or bead-work. Central African bowls and drinking-cups almost rival Etruscan or Hellenic shapes. Prehistoric vases from the barrows or lake-dwellings are not less lovely than the Trojan or Mycenaean models which are now teaching our modern potters a long-forgotten secret of taste. Even the stone hatchets and arrow-heads of the very earliest age show a decided striving after aesthetic effect. And when we remember that these exquisite carvings and these polished jade implements are produced with miserably inefficient tools and appliances—when we recollect the instances quoted by Sir John Lubbock where whole years are spent in the perfecting of a single art-product, in grinding smooth a jasper hatchet or polishing a crystal ear-drop—we cannot fail to wonder at the aesthetic fervour of these unsophisticated artists. There is positively no object, however insignificant, in the ordinary savage hut, on which immense pains have not been expended for purely ornamental purposes.

Look, by way of contrast, at our English labourer's cottage. A few painted deal chairs, a square white table, an iron bedstead, half a dozen plain Delft cups and saucers, a little coarse table linen, and a pile of bedclothes—these constitute almost the whole furniture of nine out of ten English households. We must not be led away by thinking of a

stray cottage or so in the country, or a few model workmen's houses in the outskirts of our towns, where gay flowers and bits of ornamental pottery add a touch of grace to the little home. Such homes are really quite exceptional, and by far the larger number of our people seem wholly destitute of aesthetic surroundings in any shape. We must never forget that the vast majority of Englishmen live and die either in the stifling dens of our great towns or in the cheerless little stone-floored cottages of our country, whose thatched eaves look so picturesque without and whose bare walls chill the eye with their cold reception within. Why is it that civilisation has done so little to raise, or rather so much to lower, their aesthetic sensibilities ?

Two reasons must be given in answer to this question. The first and most obvious one has doubtless already occurred to every thinking person. Civilised life so heightens the struggle for existence that the mass of men are compelled ceaselessly to devote their whole labour to the bare task of earning their daily bread. In spite of occasional hardship and periodical starvation, the savage generally finds his life admit of considerable leisure, which he can employ in aesthetic occupations. During the intervals of hunting, fishing, nutting, planting maize, and gathering yam or bread-fruit, he can find time not only for grinding stone weapons or weaving baskets, but also for building artistic head-dresses, tattooing his chest and arms, drilling shells or fossils to string as wampum, and staining his roughly-woven fibres with green, yellow, blue, and scarlet dyes. He can lie on his back in the sun to carve his calabash or polish his cocoa-nut cup. The modern Eskimos, like the cave-men of the Dordogne, have leisure in their snow huts for sketching spirited representations of their hunting parties, scratched on the mammoth tusks which they take from the frozen carcases embedded in the ice of the glacial period. But our English labourers and artisans must toil the live-long day to procure bare food and drink, with such minimum of clothing and furniture as the habits of the race imperatively demand. What political economy, with its customary grim facetiousness, calls the "standard of comfort" among our lower classes, does not embrace more than the scantiest necessities of warmth and sustenance. It leaves no margin for decoration, either in personal dress or household furniture; far less for distinctive works of art such as those which so commonly adorn even the poorest savage huts.

But the second reason, to which, as it seems to me, sufficient importance has hardly ever been attributed, is this. The rapid growth of civilisation has itself entailed so great an advance in art-workmanship that the highest art-products have utterly outgrown the means of all but the wealthiest classes: and the lower branches have thus been left to lag behind and fall out of the artistic category altogether. We have paid so much attention to our Cimabues that we have till quite lately utterly neglected our coal-scuttles. It is not so amongst unsophisticated savages. With them, whatever is worth making is worth making well. Moreover, the difference between their highest and their lowest handicraft is so

sight that almost every article is equally well made. But with us it would long have been thought absurd to ask Mr. Millais or Sir Frederick Leighton to turn from portraying their Jersey Lilies or their Nausicaas to design our soup-plates and our Turkey carpets. Painting, sculpture, and architecture have thus outrun all our lesser arts, and have finally brought about a condition of things in which till yesterday they alone were thought worthy the serious attention of artists.

The growth of this divorce between art and common life is easy enough to trace. In all ages, art has specially devoted itself to royalty or religion—to the political or the ecclesiastical government. Temples and palaces are its chief homes. Whether we look at Egypt with its endless colonnades of Karnak and its granite images of Memnon and Sesostris; or at Assyria with its winged bulls and its regal bas-reliefs; or at Hellas with its Parthenons and its Theseums; or at Rome with its Colosseum and its Capitol; or at modern Europe, with its Louvre and its Escorial, its St. Peter's and its Lincoln Minster, its Vatican and its Winter Palace, we see everywhere that kings and deities gather round their dwelling-places all the grandest works of the highest national art. We may turn again to India, and there we find the same tale in the mosques and mausoleums of Agra and Delhi, in the exquisite temples of Benares, in the rock-hewn caves of Elephanta, in the gorgeous courtyards of modern Lucknow. Turn once more to Mexico, to Peru, to China, and the same fact everywhere forces itself upon our attention. Amongst ourselves, we find painting, sculpture, architecture, the thousand minor arts of wood-carving, mosaic, jewellery, intaglio, fresco, ivory-work, metallurgy, and upholstery, all pressed into the special service of royalty. Our cathedrals give us the same arts in addition to music, glass staining, embroidery, and fifty other decorative devices. From east to west, from China to Peru, we see every kind of aesthetic handicraft lavished with about equal hand upon the country's king and the country's gods.

Naturally, as the savage chief developed into the barbaric or civilised monarch, and as the arts grew up side by side with this slow evolution of the governmental agency, the highest artistic products were specially prepared for royal use. In the great Oriental despotisms, where hardly any ranks existed between the king and the slavish subject, the king himself absorbed almost all the spare labour of the community, and the gods absorbed the rest. Thus, even in the barbaric stage, the gap between the higher art which ministered to the great, and the lower arts which ministered to the people, must have been very great. But with the rapid advance made in mediæval and modern times, that gap has become immensely widened. All through the Middle Ages, especially in Italy, the higher art was developing with extraordinary rapidity. From the Renaissance, however, we must date the beginning of the modern and complete separation between the two types of art, the industrial and the æsthetic. The separation was consummated by the successors of Michel Angelo, and it remained unchallenged till a couple of dozen years ago.

The difference between a Ghirlandajo or a Luca della Robbia, and an ordinary Florentine goldsmith, was a mere question of material and purpose; the difference between a Sir Joshua and a contemporary London jeweller was total and absolute. In the first case, both were artists of slightly varying merits; in the second case, the one was an artist, and the other a respectable tradesman. It is only within the last two or three decades that the gulf has once more begun to be bridged over in northern Europe.

Even if other causes had not interfered, the mere spontaneous development of the highest art must necessarily have produced some such separation. Painting, for example, had become so highly evolved, that it required a long special training in drawing and colouring, in perspective and chiaroscuro, in anatomy and in a dozen other connected sciences. The painter must spend much time beforehand in acquiring his art, and he must also spend much time over each particular canvas in conception and composition, in copying the features of his models and working out the details of his drapery, in rendering a single finger or a refractory foot so as to satisfy the highly critical connoisseurs who had developed side by side with the developing technique of the artists. The special public which can fully appreciate fine paintings is only to be found, as a rule, amongst the wealthy classes who can afford to buy them. Thus the front rank of art naturally gets far ahead of all the lesser ranks, and produces a race of artists whose work is ridiculously advanced in comparison with the average appreciation of the masses.

But this inevitable tendency was much strengthened and accelerated at the Renaissance by two special causes. In the first place, the spirit of the classical revival (especially in its later days) tended towards the unduly exclusive cultivation of the three main visual arts, painting, sculpture, and architecture. It tended, also, towards their cultivation in a very cold and isolated form. The remains of ancient art which have come down to us are mere fragments, and they are fragments whose real relation to their surroundings was much misunderstood by the Florentine revivalists, and ridiculously caricatured during the eighteenth century, when the word "classical" became almost synonymous with cold, colourless, and insipid. The chief relics of Hellenic and Roman art are pieces of sculpture. Now Mr. Pater has lately pointed out in two of his exquisite and subtly-woven essays that Greek sculpture ought never to be divorced from the many-coloured background of minor arts which formed its native atmosphere. We should always see in fancy the chryselephantine Zeus or the tinted marble Aphrodite projected upon a mental field of mosaic, of metal work, of fresco, of stained ivory carving, of a thousand butterfly hues which have all disappeared from the disenchanted Hellas of our museums. But it was this latter pale and faded Hellas alone that the eye of Michel Angelo saw in the freshly recovered torsos of the Vatican. The gold and ivory were gone, the general background of varied arts had disappeared, the gilding and

tinting on the marble itself had been worn away by time or exposure, and only the cold and weather-stained stone remained as an isolated relic of that warm and many-hued Hellenic world, whose picture is preserved for us in the minute descriptions of Pausanias. Accordingly, the "classical" school of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the false heirs of the Renaissance, began to restore the Greek ideal as they found it in its few surviving fragments. They had not even the wall paintings of Pompeii by which to correct the erroneous conception derived from the torsos. Thus they reduced all art in the end to something so chilly and lifeless that the world hailed with delight the so-called Gothic revival about the middle of the present century, as a grateful restoration of warmth and colour to the dry bones of a mummified art.

The second and still more potent cause for the separation between artistic and industrial work was the rapid growth of the manufacturing system in northern Europe. During the Middle Ages, the painter, the sculptor, and the wood-carver were all higher handicraftsmen, whose handicraft merged insensibly into that of the decorator, the joiner, the jeweller, and the potter. These lower trades still gave an opportunity for the display of individual taste, of artistic fancy, of that capricious quaintness which forms, perhaps, the greatest charm of mediæval workmanship. But with the employment of machinery, the separation became broad and pronounced. Steam-woven patterns and calico prints have superseded the hand-made embroidery and rich brocades of earlier times. Cheap moulded crockery and stamped designs have taken the place of jars turned upon the wheel and painted decorations. Wall papers hang where tapestry hung before, and chintzes cover the chairs that were once covered by delicate needlework. Electro-plate tea-pots, machine-made jewellery, and ungainly porcelain vases replace the handicraft of humbler Cellinis, unknown Ghibertis, or inglorious Palissys. Under the influence of this cause, industrialism became frankly cheap and ugly, while æstheticism retreated into the lofty upper region of the three recognised fine arts.

In proportion as the industrial system was more or less developed in each European country did the divorce become absolute. In Italy and the south, where the manufacturing spirit never gained a firm footing, individual workmanship survived and still survives. Florentine mosaics, Roman cameos, Genoese filigree work, Venetian glass, are all of them relics of the old artistic handicraft which has lived on unmoved among the quiet Italian towns. In France, more manufacturing than Italy, but less so (at least during the eighteenth century) than England, we find a sort of intermediate stage in Sèvres porcelain and Gobelins tapestry, in Louis Quinze marquetry and Dieppe ivory-carving. But in England the gap was truly a great gulf. Between the Royal Academy and the Birmingham or Manchester workshops there was no common term. Most of our manufactures were simply and unpretentiously utilitarian. They had no affection of beauty in any way. Whatever art-furniture existed

in the country—mosaic tables or buhl cabinets in a few noble houses—was brought from those southern lands where industrialism had not yet killed out the native art-faculties of the people. A piece or two of Chinese porcelain, a stray bit of Indian carving, an Oriental rug, or embroidered cushion here and there carried the mind away to Eastern countries where steam and factories were yet wholly unknown. But at home the stereotyped uniformity of manufacturing ugliness bore undivided sway, and if a solitary Wedgwood at rare intervals had originality enough to set up some attempt at artistic industrial work, his aspirations naturally cast themselves in the prevailing classical mould.

From these tendencies two evil results inevitably flowed. In the first place, art came to be looked upon by the mass, even of the middle classes, as something wholly apart from everyday life. The aesthetic faculty was a sense to be gratified by an annual visit to the Academy, an occasional perambulation of the National Gallery, and perhaps a single pilgrimage during a lifetime to Rome and Florence. For the lower-classes, art ceased to exist at all. Their few sticks of furniture, their bits of glass and crockery, were all turned out on the strictly manufacturing pattern, with the least possible expenditure of time and money. Only the extreme upper class, the landed aristocracy and very wealthy merchants, could afford to live in an atmosphere of pictures and statues, of Italian art-furniture and Oriental porcelain.

The second evil hangs on to the first. As the only beautiful objects with which the rich were acquainted (save in the three great arts) were antique or foreign productions, the notion of rarity got inextricably and fatally mixed up with that of beauty, or even began to supersede it. The age of *virtuosi* set in. "That is a very pretty plate," you may say to a confirmed china maniac, as you look over his collection; and he will answer you unconcernedly, "Ah, yes, it is pretty, to be sure," as if that were quite an accidental and secondary consideration about it. He is surprised that you should admire the pretty plate, rather than this hideously ugly but very rare pipkin, which is one of the costliest and most vulgar specimens of old Worcester now extant. This spirit in a less exaggerated form is widely prevalent amongst all connoisseurs and collectors. They want a particular "*sang de bœuf*" or old turquoise blue Chinese vase not merely because it is beautiful, but also because it is old and rare. The self-same turquoise blue turned out by a modern Japanese or European workman they will not look at. Hence there has arisen, or arose till very lately, a certain profound hopelessness in industrial Europe—a general belief that the age of art-production was past, and that we were fatally bound down to make ugly things to all eternity. "We can never rival the past" was the unspoken thought of almost every Western manufacturer.

These considerations bring us back at last to Cimabue. I do not wish in any way to underrate the importance of the mediæval great masters; but it does seem to me that under the influence partly of the collecting

spirit and partly of the aesthetic revival, their real value and interest have been overlooked, while false and exaggerated claims have been made on their behalf. The true importance of Cimabue, for example, is historical and evolutionary, rather than strictly artistic. He, like every other early great painter, like the Egyptian, Assyrian, and Etruscan sculptors, forms a moment in the development of art. As illustrating that moment, as carrying on the unbroken succession between the comparative woodenness of his predecessors and the comparative freedom of Giotto, he possesses the deepest interest for the student of artistic evolution. He is, in fact, a critical point in the development; he attracts our attention just as the ascidian or the lepidosiren attracts the attention of the genealogical biologist. Cimabue painted eyes to look like eyes, while his Byzantine masters painted them to look like glass beads; he created stiff human beings in the place of still stiffer model saints; he made his drapery hang something like real clothes instead of hanging like starched buckram. Giotto discovered that the sky was blue and not gilded, that human limbs were made of flesh and bone, not of wood, and that men and women lived their lives instead of acting perpetual *tableaux vivants* in unnatural attitudes. Masaccio further found out that you could move your body freely on its joints, and need not always hold it in the most angular of abstract positions. The great Renaissance painters finally introduced accurate anatomical knowledge, power of drawing, and free individuality of conception and composition. It is interesting to follow the development, just as it is interesting to watch Egyptian art touching on Assyrian, and Assyrian again merging into Phoenician, Syrian, Ionian, and Athenian. We like to observe Cimabue as the transitional term between Byzantine and early Italian painting, just as we like to know what Professor Sayce tells us of the Hittites as the missing link between Oriental and Hellenic art. But too many modern enthusiasts are accustomed accordingly to speak of mediæval artists in terms which would be extravagant if applied to the most developed aesthetic works. They weary us with over-appreciation of Lippi and Perugino: they annoy us by dragging doubtful Memmis out of the dark recesses of Italian churches, and finding in them a thousand admirable qualities which are wholly invisible to the cold and matter-of-fact eye of the historical critic. Yet, curiously enough, it is these very people who are generally least ready to admit that there can be any merit or interest in the still more infantile art of Memphis and Nineveh. Let us praise Giotto by all means for his admirable colouring, for his emancipated grouping, for his comparatively natural figures; but do not let us pretend that all his tints are as fine as Titian's, that all his legs and arms are absolutely perfect, or that all his attitudes are really those which human beings actually adopt in their every-day existence.

Now, the general position brought about in England by all these combined causes was something like this. The poorer people had no art at all. The richer imagined art to be mainly confined to painting, and

perhaps sculpture : while they confused a love of beauty with a taste for making collections. The middle class could not afford the only kind of art which it knew, and therefore contented itself with bad imitations in the shape of cheap family portraits in oils and similar monstrosities. Look into the Balbi palace at Genoa, the big white house nearly opposite the Annunziata Church, and you have a good specimen of the Italian style fully carried out in all its details. Wide marble staircases lead you into the great reception rooms. Vandycks, Guidos, and Titians hang upon the walls. The ceilings are painted in fresco : the floors inlaid with parti-coloured marble. Every table, cabinet, or chimney-piece is a triumph of decorative art. This is what the rich man's house can be made, after its fashion, and a fine and stately fashion it is. But all these things are impossible for the man of moderate means in our industrial England ; and having no model of his own on which to adorn his house, he takes the most unattainable of all the rich man's luxuries, the great painting, as his aim, and gets himself copied in oils, with a heavy gilt frame included, for ten guineas. All the rest of his house is on the manufacturing pattern. He covers his wall with a tasteless paper, and his floor with a tasteless carpet ; but he hangs the picture and frame over his dining-room side-board, and thinks complacently to himself that he has performed the whole duty of man as a munificent patron of art.

For a great many years the British middle classes contentedly slumbered on in this Philistine repose. The Exhibition of 1851 suddenly woke them up with an unexpected start. They had set on foot that Exhibition with a decided idea that they were about to astonish the world by displaying their cheap calicos, their excellent steel blades, and their patent revolving corkscrews, to the admiration of all outsiders. Well, in these things they undoubtedly and deservedly carried away the palm from all competitors, even from their own industrial kinsmen across the Atlantic. But when they put their own goods side by side with goods from France and Italy, from Bohemia and Spain, from India and Japan, it began to strike the Birmingham and Manchester manufacturers that their native productions were perhaps just a trifle ugly. Long before, the "classical" school had given way to the "Gothic" revival, and the minds of the architects and ecclesiastical decorators had been carried back (partly through the High Church reaction) to mediæval models. But the Great Exhibition was the first hint received by the mass of our manufacturing classes of their own shortcomings. Everybody knows the history of the æsthetic movement which set in from that critical date. England recognised its new need. Schools of art and design began to inundate London and the provinces. South Kensington Museums, needlework exhibitions, artistic potteries, and decorative upholsteries sprang up on every side. Æstheticism became first a fashion, and at last almost a craze. In its earlier phases, the new movement affected only the upper classes. Art-workmanship was introduced into the luxuries of the rich—the silver caskets, the ornamental plaques, the carved oaken

furniture of wealthy halls. But side by side with the practice of the great manufacturers went the preaching of men like Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Morris. The attention of truly artistic minds was being turned aside, in part at least, from Cimabue and Leonardo to coal-scuttles and arm-chairs. During the last five years, the movement has spread rapidly downwards through society. It has passed beyond the aristocracy and the upper middle class, and now it has reached the stratum of the small shopkeepers and clerks. In the course of time it may perhaps reach the labouring man, and brighten up his cheerless, unlovely home with a few fairer gleams of artistic beauty. Already it has aestheticised our wall-papers and our carpets, our vases and our tea-trays, our curtains and our chimney-pieces ; perhaps it may before long do something to aestheticise the poor man's chairs and tables, cups and saucers, clothing and surroundings. Those who have lived in homes, first of the old and then of the new type, know with what an unwonted grace their whole life has been suddenly invested by a few simple changes in its artistic environment. They seem to live and move in a purer atmosphere ; all existence seems sweetly set to a higher key.

Naturally, when first the manufacturing interest awoke to its own exceeding ugliness, it began to look about for some model upon which it should improve its personal appearance. A great many causes led it in the beginning towards mediævalism. The close connection between the High Church and the Gothic revivals, the strong share borne by ecclesiastical art in the new movement, coupled with the complete gap in that art between the Reformation and our own time, inevitably brought about such a tendency. Already, even in the higher arts, a change of taste in the same direction was visible. People had given up admiring Guido and the Caracci in favour of Francia and Filippino Lippi. It was the age of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the church restoration mania. Pure mediævalism, well or ill understood, was all the rage. Metal-work and wood-carving, in what was called Gothic styles, inundated our houses. Sir Charles Eastlake became the oracle of domestic taste. A tendency to pointed arches, in season and out of season, ran through all our struggling decorative art. The cathedrals were the great existing monuments of mediæval workmanship, and, owing in part to this fact, the whole mediæval revival took a certain undefined ecclesiastical and architectural turn. The architects and the clergy, indeed, had been its prime authors, and they impressed upon it too distinctly their own habits of thought. We sat down to dinner on a sort of carved-oak bishop's throne, and we hung up our hats on a domestic variety of pinnacled sedilia. Even the coal-scuttles assumed the air of church furniture. It was a little ridiculous, perhaps, but it was a step towards decorative improvement. Like Cimabue himself, it formed a passing moment in our æsthetic evolution. The bad in it has mostly passed away, but the good has remained and will doubtless remain for ever.

After the mediæval stage came the Renaissance, which did not supersede the other, but, so to speak, was superposed upon it. We began to admire Henri Deux ware and to read Mr. Pater's admirable essays. Moreover, people felt gradually more or less conscious that the mediæval school had gone a little too far. The knobs on the Gothic chairs hurt their backs, and the absurdity of carved wooden arches supporting nothing hurt their rational sensibilities. So we had next, in due historical order, the Queen Anne school, of which the Miss Garrets, with their pleasant dogmatic style of "Thou shalt do this," and "Thou shalt not buy that," were the chief prophetesses. Chippendale furniture replaced the pointed arches of the previous decade. The Queen Anne school was a great and solid improvement, and its work will abide among us for many a long day. It introduced us to many good things, and above all it set to work devising decorations which would accord with the ordinary style of brick house common among the well-to-do middle classes of England. It gave us pretty wall-papers, designed on good decorative principles; and gentle colours, and nice patterns in chintz or tapestry, and sensible chairs, and comfortable fire-places, and cosy sofas. Under a thin disguise of archaism, it really recognised the needs of modern comfort. Moreover, it penetrated the serried phalanx of British-Philistinism, and induced it to discover its own hideousness. All this is good and commendable. No doubt, like all other schools, the Queen Anne school has too much mannerism; but we shall learn in time to reject the mannerism and cleave to the spirit. The new red brick houses are apt to be a little tedious and monotonous in their interior decorations when one sees a dozen or so of them at a time; the hand of the master is everywhere too conspicuous; but after all, how infinitely preferable they are to the old-fashioned Philistine houses with no decoration at all!

Concurrently with the Queen Anne revival came the Japanese invasion. It was natural that when we began to look out for decorative art in cheap forms we should turn our eyes to those Oriental countries where such art has formed a part of the popular life for all ages. In Japan, painting and sculpture never rose high enough to kill off the lower arts; machinery never destroyed the native taste and ingenuity of the people. The Japanese products had exquisite colour, curious quaintness, and a certain national flavour which gave them some ethnographical interest. We were glad to welcome their paper fans and umbrellas, their lacquered fire-screens, their papier-mâché trays, their bamboo whatnots, their daintily-coloured porcelain and coarser pottery ware. At the same time with Japan we welcomed China and India as well. "In Tiberim Syrus defluit Orontes"—the Ganges and the Hoang-Ho overflowed the banks of Thameš. Benares metal-work and Lucknow jars, Indian durries and Chinese bronzes, jostled one another in half the windows in Regent Street. Everything Oriental became equally fashionable. Persian tiles, Turkey carpets, and Cashmere rugs found their way into every family. Most of these new introductions, again, are also

good, each after its kind. Above all, they are for the most part cheap as well as beautiful, and they enable the comparatively poor to obtain really pretty decorations for prices far lower than those of almost any similar European manufactures.

The general conclusion which we may draw from these varying freaks of fashion is a comfortable one. The mass of the well-to-do classes are in search of an aesthetic style which will suit their purses. A little while ago we heard Mr. Poynter asserting that Mr. Ruskin had "no feeling for the beautiful in art." That is the sort of language which is common amongst the higher art-critics. But those who believe that every savage and every child has a feeling for the beautiful in art, do not trouble themselves about these high questions. They look for a simpler and more comprehensive kind of beauty. We are still groping about, but we are on the right path. Cast upon our own resources, we were compelled at first to take the best we could get. Now we are striking out new lines for ourselves. Day by day the love for beauty in small surroundings, for art at home, is spreading downward into successively lower strata of our people. What we need is that the feeling for beauty as beauty should be encouraged. We must not let ourselves be led away by the apostles of higher aestheticism or the mere bric-à-brac collectors. A pretty thing is pretty whatever it may cost, and, other things equal, is all the better for being cheap. From the old-curiosity-shop point of view, a piece of Venetian glass is valuable only because it is old; from the decorative point of view it is valuable because it is beautiful and effective, and it will be quite as beautiful and effective if it was made yesterday as if it was made for Dandolo himself. Just at present there is a good deal of extravagance, a good deal of archaeological puritanism, a good deal of dogmatic assertion. But all these are common accompaniments of every revolution. In the end, no doubt, we shall invent more original types for ourselves. There will be less of mediaevalism, less of Queen Anne, less of the Japenesque, less even of eclecticism, and more individuality. Already one can find dozens of homes, even among comparative laymen, where the prevailing style is neither Mr. Morris's, nor Dr. Dresser's, nor any other authority's, but the owner's own. There are thousands of people who feel that they cannot criticise, perhaps cannot even appreciate, Corot and Millet with the intense fervour and subtle penetration of Mr. Comyns Carr, but who can nevertheless enjoy the beauty of a daintily-shaped and delicately-coloured earthenware vase, or a simple and decorative textile fabric. They firmly believe in their own right to admire Doulton ware, even though they may be profoundly ignorant of majolica or Chelsea. It is worth while to aim at supplying this large class of people with artistic products which they can understand, and in the midst of which they can pass their lives. England is now essentially a limited democracy, and its art must become more democratic every day. Painting and sculpture can minister mainly to the few alone; decorative art must minister to the many. Nor is this

any degradation to its office, but rather the contrary. "Art," says a great critic, "is never more supreme than when it fashions from the commonest materials objects of the greatest beauty."

Professor Huxley once expressed a wish that a race of palaeontologists might some day come into existence who knew nothing of geology. So one might almost wish that a race of decorative artists might come into existence who knew nothing of museums and connoisseurs. They would then set to work to invent beautiful and effective decorations on rational principles, not according to pre-established models. Those two turquoise-blue vases on the mantelpiece are modern Chinese, and no one but a collector could tell them from the ancient specimens. They do the work they are intended to do, that is to say, they decorate the room. But the collector would despise them because they have not got the proper mark. That piece of Worcester in the cabinet behind me, on the other hand, is genuine and valuable; but it is so frightfully ugly that it retains its place only out of consideration for the feelings of the friend who added it to the scratch collection of odds and ends in the little cabinet. A museum is one thing, and a dwelling-house another. It has been too much the fashion amongst our most artistic classes to confuse the two. Let us religiously preserve curiosities by all means, just as we preserve Cimabues, or tumuli, or Egyptian mummies; but don't let us imagine that because they are curious or ancient they are necessarily decorative. Above all, don't let us assent to the converse proposition, that because pretty things are cheap and modern they are necessarily unworthy of artistic consideration.

G. A.

## Unreformed Corporations.

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A BLUE-BOOK has recently been published under the formal title of "Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into Municipal Corporations not subject to the Municipal Corporations Acts (other than the City of London), together with Minutes of Evidence, &c. presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty." It discloses a state of things a trifle less comic than the unreformed system of borough representation, inasmuch as there is no corporation to be found in any place which is totally uninhabited. There are non-resident burgesses and non-resident chief magistrates ; and the population in proportion to the number of municipal officers is sometimes ludicrously small, reminding us of Macpherson's army in Bon Gaultier, which consisted of five-and-twenty men and five-and-thirty pipers. But still there is nothing in the system corresponding exactly to old Sarum. The place inhabited by the corporation may be only a small village : but there is at all events that. We see nothing to prevent aldermen and jurats, and burgesses and capital burgesses, from still retaining the small revenues which they draw from landed property, and spending them where they pleased, when not one stone was left upon another of the original "borough town." Still they have not come to that point yet ; governing bodies, ranging from twelve to twenty, with half a dozen officers in their employment, have never less than from a hundred and fifty to a couple of hundred subjects whose affairs one would be inclined to say that they mismanaged, if mismanagement on such a Lilliputian scale can be spoken of seriously.

We suppose that scarcely one reader in a hundred will understand at first sight to what the above paragraph refers, or will be prepared to hear that, scattered up and down the country, chiefly in the south and west, lie from eighty to a hundred municipalities untouched by the Act of 1835, though of course they have lost the privileges which they enjoyed before the Reform Bill of 1832. They are not all of such diminutive proportions as we have above described ; among the eighty-six reported on by the Commissioners being eleven Parliamentary boroughs, and several other towns of which the population is not under two thousand. But the great majority of them are practically mere villages, with their mayors or high bailiffs, aldermen, justices, town clerks, mace-bearers, port-reeves, criers, ale-tasters, scavengers, carnals, and constables, many of these officials having neither any duties to perform nor any salaries to receive. Let us open the report at random. We light upon the borough of Bovey Tracey in Devonshire. As is frequently the case, the

borough and the parish are not coterminous, the population of the latter being a thousand, while that of the former is two hundred. Of these about fifty are freeholders, and entitled to the privileges of the corporation. The welfare of this little community is cared for by a bailiff, a port-reeve, a crier, an ale-taster, a scavenger, and two constables. Its income is 17*l.* a year, which is spent, we are told, in paying the land tax and property tax, in printing circulars, in perambulating the borough boundaries, and an annual dinner in the month of May, of which all the freeholders partake. The boundary stones of the borough are said to be from six hundred to nine hundred years old. The corporation has no seal; but it has some ancient weights and measures which are never used; and tradition preserves the memory of a mace. There are, however, better specimens than Bovey Tracey, because here justice is administered, and the public-houses are licensed, by the county magistrates. But such is far from being the case in some other places, where the corporations are more strictly speaking municipal.

Fordwich is a village in Kent with a population of two hundred and seventy. The governing body consists of a mayor and seven "jurats," assisted by a town clerk. Anybody can become a freeman by the payment of 5*l.* 10*s.*; as soon as he is a freeman he can become a jurat; and as soon as he becomes a jurat, he becomes a magistrate. These gentlemen try prisoners in the Borough Court, who undergo their sentences in Maidstone or Canterbury Gaol. They also license all the public-houses, which are four in number; and the management of charities, to the amount of about a hundred pounds a year, is in their hands. The rent of a fishery, let to the Stour Fishery Association, which, however, does not produce more than about ten shillings each, they divide among themselves. Ouenborough, in the same county, has a population of eight hundred. It is governed by a mayor, bailiff, and four jurats. It keeps a recorder, a treasurer, a town clerk, a constable, and two sergeants-at-mace, who receive 44*l.* a year. Axbridge, in Somersetshire, has a population of nine hundred. The corporation consists of a mayor, recorder, alderman, eight capital burgesses, and free burgesses. The mayor, the alderman, and the recorder, who never attends, are the magistrates who try prisoners and license the public-houses. The present mayor is a tanner. The alderman is a watchmaker. There is, of course, a town clerk; and at Axbridge there is an inspector of weights and measures. The income of the corporation is about a hundred and twenty pounds a year. Camelford, in Cornwall, has a population of one thousand. It has a mayor, seven capital burgesses, a recorder, a town clerk, and a sergeant-at-mace. The recorder does not act; the corporation has nothing to do, and the duty of the sergeant-at-mace is to wait on the corporation. Dunwich, in Suffolk, has a population of two hundred and thirty. The corporation—Heaven save the mark—consists of two bailiffs, fifteen aldermen, twelve common councilmen, and twenty-three freemen. The bailiffs, recorder, and two assistant justices, who are simply such as have been

bailiffs, are the magistrates. The recorder is not a lawyer, and the other magistrates are farmers. St. Clears, in Carmarthenshire, has a population of about a thousand. The corporation consists of three port-reeves, a recorder, a town clerk, two common attorneys, a crier, and an indefinite number of burgesses. The official members of it appear to have nothing to do.

The reader will not be surprised to learn that since 1835 a good many of these village municipalities have expired of inanition. Bossiny, an old borough town in Tintagel, which may possibly have been a flourishing community in the days of King Arthur, finally gave up the ghost in 1871. The last mayor was appointed in 1841, but, like "the last man," he was surrounded by skeletons. The burgesses were nearly all dead, and no more were appointed. One only is alive at the present moment, besides the mayor, Mr. Symons, who has possession of the old regalia in the shape of a mace and a cup. He still continued to receive some rents till 1849, since which time the property has been occupied by somebody who pays nothing at all. The same gentleman had an interest in the Town Hall; and when he was bought out nine years ago by Lord Wharncliffe, and the edifice pulled down, the last vestige of this ancient corporation disappeared. In 1860 the corporation of Plympton Earle, in Devonshire, voted themselves extinct. In 1849 the corporation of Tregony, in Cornwall, was found to have literally died out. The corporation of Castle Rising, which existed in 1835, has simply disappeared.

The privileges enjoyed by the members of these petty local bodies, small as they are, are quite enough to give rise to a plentiful crop of social jealousies and heartburnings. There is no want of village Gracchi among those who are outside of the "populus;" and one cannot help exclaiming as one reads what admirable materials are here for a novel in the hands of George Eliot! One main source of the dissatisfaction which the commissioners encountered, though it was by no means universal, was in the quality of the persons who filled the highest offices of State, and frequently administered justice. At Axbridge, in Somersetshire, as we have seen, the mayor is a tanner, and the alderman a watchmaker, and these are the two magistrates for the borough. At Woodstock they lately had an alderman who couldn't spell his own name or that of the town. At Harton, in Devonshire, the port-reeve is a carpenter, and his predecessor was a shoemaker. At Higham Ferrers, in Northamptonshire, complaint was made that the aldermen and burgesses were the most ignorant and illiterate persons in the town. The largest ratepayer in the parish had been proposed as a member of the corporation, but was beaten by a blacksmith. At Loughor, in Glamorganshire, the port-reeve who sits as a magistrate is sometimes only a journeyman tradesman, a mason perhaps, or a plasterer. At Malmesbury, which is a Parliamentary borough with a considerable population, complaints on this score were very rife. The alderman of Malmesbury sits as a borough magistrate; and the present alderman is a working tailor. Among the burgesses who have

"passed the chair," we find one described as a yeoman who was recently a domestic servant, another a mason, and another a cabinet maker. It is true that at the sittings of the court the deputy high steward, who is a solicitor, is present, and that he and the town clerk keep the tailor pretty straight. Still there is the fact that he sits in the chair, and occasionally, after being duly primed, delivers the sentence of the court. It is only fair, however, to add in this place the testimony of Mr. Powell, who was member for the borough, in favour of the corporation. "I should not say," says he, "that the townspeople outside the corporation were of a more intelligent character than the corporation themselves. I think that they are a thoroughly sound common sense body of men . . . and that their decisions would compare favourably with those of any bench of magistrates in the country." Mr. Powell believed the movement against the corporation to be purely political. "The alderman and corporation have always supported the Conservative party from time immemorial," and hence these misrepresentations of them. Mr. Tullaway's brother—Tullaway himself is the tailor—who was alleged by a witness to be one of the "most besotted men in the place," is an assistant burgess, and has been alderman. "I saw him yesterday," said the witness, who is a postman, "coming from one of the beerhouses near my stable in company with a man who is one of the most besotted men in our town, and likewise an assistant burgess and brother to the present alderman. In the evening when I was coming round from the post-office to my house, this fellow, whose name is Tullaway, and is brother to the alderman, was standing near the market cross in a state of intoxication, and he said, 'Halloo, old fellow, are you going up to London?' I said, 'I am, and I hope you will be happy; ' and he said, 'I hope you will; ' that was last evening. I suppose they found out that I was coming up here, and I had roused the ire of this immaculate corporation, I expect, a little."

Does not this little bit bring the whole state of party feeling in the good old town vividly before us? There is the worthy burgess *a laudator temporis acti*, and a scoffer at the new ideas which proscribe cakes and ale, thinking little of education, and able perhaps to "buy up many of them as has it" sauntering along the streets in company with a mellow friend, and conversing very probably on these pestilent disturbers of the peace, who were for doing away with all the comfortable old customs and venerable institutions of the place out of mere envy, jealousy, and naughtiness of heart. On the other hand is the ardent reformer, in the person of the local postman, who, although a commoner, never expects to be a burgess, that being an honour which he does not covet, perhaps because the grapes are sour, determined, however, if he can, to pull down the house about the ears of the exclusives, and to exhibit himself before a London audience in the character of a superior person, deeply shocked by the misgovernment of his native town, and the gross habits and low birth of the official class. It is a beautiful picture. But it requires the hand which drew the people of Milby to do adequate justice to it.

The actual advantages of belonging to one of these corporations, or being one of its officers, may be easily summed up. They have the management of the corporate property, the licensing of public-houses, and the privilege of spending certain sums of money on corporation dinners, or of dividing it among themselves. Where they exercise magisterial jurisdiction, they may perhaps have the power of screening a friend, or paying off a grudge against an enemy, though it is but fair to say that few such charges have been brought against them. The management of their small properties, as it is on the whole the most important, so it seems to be that one of their functions which has given rise to the greatest discontent. Their revenues are derived from the rents of land and buildings, investments, dues, tolls, and fees on the admission of officers and burgesses. And as might have been expected, it is a custom in a great many of these boroughs to let the property to members of the corporation at an absurdly low rate. Land worth a pound an acre will be let to burgesses on leases renewable for ever at five or six shillings. At one place, Kidwelly, land worth fifty shillings an acre is let in this way at half-a-crown. At St. Clears, which we have already mentioned, property worth from two to three hundred pounds a year brings in sixty-one. In fact, favouritism and jobbery of every description appear to be rampant; and what adds to the discontent of the outside public is that the corporation accounts are not published. They may be seen on application, it is true; but that is not enough. The malcontents think that they ought to be furnished with a copy. They want to know "what becomes o' the money?" And they think, not unnaturally, that the town might derive more benefit than it does from what is, after all, public property. Old Mr. Thomas Tonbridge, of New Romney, gave evidence to this effect, which is very good reading. "He never had no schooling in his young days." He has picked it all up since, and something besides, we should infer from the information he vouchsafed to the commissioners. They have land let out "among themselves" for 793*l.* a year, for which he would have given them 1,000*l.* a year, and the first year's rent in advance. He was ready to have sat down and written the cheque off-hand. Like the northern farmer, he has so many acres of the Duke's, and "land of his own besides;" and what is specially to the purpose, "his sheepskins are all at home." This communicative old gentleman objects to things being done "secret and sly like." He wants to see "everything open and above-board;" for where folks don't understand what is being done they are sure to fancy there is something wrong, even though there may be nothing. To much the same purpose is the evidence of a leather merchant and a currier from the little town of Higham Ferrers. The former gentleman, like the Malmesbury postman, had also been defeated by the village blacksmith in a struggle for admission to the government, and he was proportionably bitter in consequence. There seems quite a run upon blacksmiths in unreformed corporations. The administration of justice

by the curious class of archons whom this report exhibits to us, does not seem, as a rule, to have given rise to much complaint; and where it has done so, the complaint itself has not seldom been as stupid as the worst of them. Some amusing cases, however, are furnished by Fordwich, Malmesbury, Seaford, and Higham Ferrers. In Fordwich it appears that Colonel Cox, who is said to be "an irritable gentleman," locked up another gentleman, with whom he was unfortunate enough to quarrel, in the town gaol. "He took him bodily, and locked him up for the night." In Malmesbury there was a story which admirably illustrates the proneness to suspicion so characteristic of a certain class of society. "There was a young man," said one witness, "apprehended some time last year, in the month of March, and Mr. Weekes was then alderman. The young man was given into custody, I think, by his own father, because he had obtained goods under alleged false pretences from a jeweller in our town, Mr. Barnard, and Mr. Barnard applied for the goods, and his father waxed wrath upon the subject, and sent for a policeman and gave his son into custody. He was taken to the station-house, and this Mr. Weekes, our late alderman, sent to the station-house the next morning, and released the prisoner from the station, and this has been the cause of great discontent in our borough. Folks talk a good deal about it." It turned out on inquiry that nothing irregular had been done. But the same witness, when asked by one of the commissioners if there was any relationship between the alderman and the young man, replied: "He was connected so far, as the alderman and father were both members of the same community or chapel. The young man was the son of respectable parents, but the lower classes say that they do not consider justice was administered impartially, and that if it had been one of them they would have been brought before a magistrate and committed for trial." The patriotic postman, for the witness was no other than an old acquaintance, had probably never heard of Mr. Pell and the late Lord Chancellor, but the lower classes in Malmesbury were evidently of the same opinion as the elder Mr. Weller in regard to the impunity of aristocratic offenders. "Parliament ought to ha' took it up," said that venerable man, when he heard that the Keeper of the Royal Conscience had been guilty of profane swearing; "and if he'd been a poor man they'd ha' done it." The alderman of Malmesbury had not the same excuse as the noble and learned lord who was so much attached to Mr. Pell. But the suspicions of the Commons were totally without foundation, as no charge at all was ever brought against the young man, who had been locked up when he was drunk for threatening his father with violence. No one in the morning appeared to prosecute, and the prisoner was necessarily discharged. But the Commons only shook their heads, and no doubt continue to believe to this day that the liberation of this young man was a gross piece of favouritism, and a daring contempt of the law. On this occasion the two offenders were Moravians, or "United Brethren." The witness added, for the infor-

zation of the commissioners, that his son Samuel was once "unfortunately assaulted," and that, owing to the corruption of the bench, the offender was most inadequately punished. Moreover, there was great disorder in court. When the prosecutor's witness appeared to be sworn, he was greeted with loud cries of "Thee must not." And as the prosecutor himself was leaving the court, he was subjected to the indignity of having a man's fist thrust in his face. At Seaford the magistrates were accused of being drunk upon the bench. And at Higham Ferrers a sad failure of justice was narrated by the currier who had been defeated by the blacksmith. "A member of the corporation had a rent-audit held at his house. There were the late mayor and several other members of the corporation at his house until early in the morning. They went into the servants' room while the servants were in bed, and ordered them to get out of bed and dress themselves. One man insisted upon remaining in the room while the two female servants were dressing themselves. One of the servants left, and a friend of hers went to the deputy-recorder and asked for a summons, but he refused to grant one."

Being asked by Mr. John Karslake what offence was charged, the witness said he did not know. But "people thought there ought to be something." The complainant "wanted a summons against A. B. for staying in the room and refusing to go out while the servant was dressing." They were told that the magistrates did not know what offence had been committed, and that they could not grant a summons. But the people "thought they ought to have justice." This modern Appius Claudius appears to have got off too easily, but it is difficult to see what else the magistrates could have done. The Commissioner, at all events, did not think the charge against them proved.

As might have been anticipated, a good deal of eating and drinking figures in the corporation expenses. The entire revenues of Bovey Tracey are 17*l.* per annum; and the expenditure for one year was 10*s.* 11*d.* land tax, 3*s.* 6*d.* for printing, and 15*l.* 3*s.* for "dinners, brandy, and punch." Some evil-disposed persons have suggested that the money might be better laid out in improving the water supply, or in promoting the interests of education. A Mr. Mugford, we are told, has been "rather noisy" on the subject. But as this gentleman is accustomed to bring forward his proposals in a state of intoxication, at which times he curses and swears a good deal, and "wants to fight," it is perhaps not surprising that his efforts have as yet been unsuccessful. The ex-mayor, it is said (Mr. J. Hurrell), has spared neither time nor money in the sacred cause of dining. If people want water or learning, he argues, let them go the rates, and not rob a poor man of his beer, which was granted to him many hundred years ago by the king, God bless him!

At Axbridge they only dine occasionally, but the burgesses or free-men have a glass of sherry and a slice of seed cake on the election of the mayor. It is at Malmesbury, however, that perhaps the funniest institution of all is to be found. This is the "seeking feast" or enter-

tainment given by the landholder who seeks to be an assistant burgess, or the assistant burgess who desires to be a capital burgess. The account of this custom, as given by numerous witnesses, is not very clear on some points, for it still leaves us in doubt as to what is the motive power by which the feast is set agoing. An aspirant for municipal honours must first, we suppose, let it be generally known to the twenty-four assistant burgesses that he is anxious to be enrolled among them. But the second stage of the transaction is involved in considerable obscurity, no one of the witnesses being competent to explain with certainty the etiquette which governs it. That the candidate says openly to the burgess, "Agree to elect me at the next vacancy, and I will then give you a seeking feast," was denied almost with indignation. This was far too coarse a way of putting the arrangement. That the burgesses, on the other hand, say to the candidate that they will have him if he gives them this feast is likewise repudiated as an erroneous version of the business. We suppose there is a tacit understanding, the operation of which none but those born to it can hope to comprehend. It is certain that both the seeking feast and the return feast are considered to be essential parts of the election; and that is all which it is necessary to know. The seeking-feast appears to be a rough-and-ready business; the seeker and his friends meeting at a public-house in the evening, when the entertainment consists of beer, grog, and tobacco, with bread and cheese for those who like it. After the election, however, a more sumptuous banquet is provided, in the middle of the day, at a cost of six or seven pounds; a regular dinner, in fact. In simpler times the *pièce de résistance* was a ham. With the march of luxury, however, the municipal palate has grown daintier, and the seeker who has found is now expected to provide a sirloin. There is plenty of drinking on these occasions, and formerly a plentiful supply of intoxicated burgesses might be seen about the streets in the afternoon. Matters, however, are said to have mended a little, and we are now told euphemistically that "they have a glass or two of wine," that they "get merry, and like that, but nothing but what they know what is going on." The burgesses do not now "wallow" about the streets. The idea, however, of giving a seeking feast with tea, is still regarded with contempt, partly as a disagreeable thing in itself, partly as a radical innovation, deserving the scorn of all well-regulated minds. A teetotal candidate sent his wife to the assistant burgesses to know whether tea could be recognised as a legitimate beverage. "No," answered these noble-minded men; "we will not alter the old custom." They would stand upon the ancient ways, and if they stumbled on them, too, sometimes, it was all in the spirit of reverence. If, however, the seeker chose to drink tea himself, while the others drank better stuff, he was at liberty to do so. The feast given by a newly-elected capital burgess to his brother capitals is a still grander affair, and costs a pound a head.

At Woodstock, a witness complained that the only way of getting into the corporation was "to go to the public-house every night, and be

jolly, and so on, and do as they do," and that for a person of a different character (like the witness), who refrained from all evil company, such honour was unattainable. Woodstock, however, is not the only place, nor are unreformed corporations the only bodies of men who are guided by similar considerations. Sinners will never love saints to the end of time; besides which, an ascetic alderman is a contradiction in terms, an unnatural combination of ideas tolerable only to a morbid fancy or a dyspeptic constitution.

Politics, it is needless to say, run high in these little communities; the ins being mostly blue, and the outs principally yellow. These divisions are especially noticeable in the little town of Woodstock, from the history of which we glean the interesting psychological fact that all glove makers are Liberals. Question 10,479:

Can you at all account for the glove manufacturers being excluded as a body?—I think that it is on account of their being all Liberals in politics; I do not know any glove manufacturer but who is Liberal in politics. That is how you account for it?—I do not know whether that is the reason or not; I only know that they are Liberals, and are left out. I know that they are very much annoyed at being left out. I have had conversation with all of them.

It seems, then, that the glove maker is true to his principles, and is not to be bribed even by the prospect of promotion, such as, according to one witness, "any inhabitant of the place would deem an honour." But we still have to inquire what is the necessary connection between glove making and Liberalism. As gloves are chiefly worn by the well-to-do classes, one would have thought that the trade would be on the side of property. The glove, too, has its feudal associations, and the political creed of the modern glove maker may possibly be an example of reaction. Any way, the fact is curious, and deserves the consideration of philosophers.

The whole Report is very interesting, carrying us back, as it does, for so many centuries, to the time when these dwindling villages were flourishing commercial towns, newly chartered by some Saxon or Norman sovereign, and forming the germs from which has sprung the great English middle-class. Sometimes, however, great privileges have been conferred by the neighbouring Barons, traces of which are still visible in surviving manorial rights. In some small towns the mayoralty is hereditary in the lord's family. But, interesting as many of these institutions may be in the light of relics, they present few other attractions, and seem to serve no other useful purpose. Some of them survive in towns of some considerable importance, and might with propriety be placed under the Municipal Corporation Act. In the case of the majority, the funds, we suppose, will some day be vested in the Charity Commissioners, or handed over to School Boards for the benefit of the whole population; or should the new municipal government of which we hear so much be extended to the counties, it is possible that the revenues of Tregony, and Bossiny, and Dunwich might be turned to uses more nearly corresponding to their original ones.

## Hours in a Library.

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No. XXII.—STERNE.

“Love me, love my book” is a version of a familiar proverb which one might be slow to accept. There are, as one need hardly say, many admirable persons for whose sake one would gladly make any sacrifice of personal comfort short of that implied in a study of their works. But the converse of the statement is more nearly true. I confess that I at any rate love a book pretty much in proportion as it makes me love the author. I do not of course speak of histories or metaphysical treatises which one reads for the sake of the information or of the logical teaching; but of the imaginative books which appeal in the last resort to the sympathy between the writer and the reader. It matters not whether you are brought into contact with a man by seeing or hearing, by the printed or spoken word—the ultimate source of pleasure is the personal affinity. To read a book in the true sense—to read it, that is, not as a critic but in the spirit of enjoyment—is to lay aside for the moment one’s own personality, and to become a part of the author. It is to enter the world in which he habitually lives—for each of us lives in a separate world of his own—to breathe his air, and therefore to receive pleasure and pain according as the atmosphere is or is not congenial. I may by an intellectual effort perceive the greatness of a writer whose character is essentially antagonistic to my own; but I cannot feel it as it must be felt for genuine enjoyment. The qualification must, of course, be understood that a great book really expresses the most refined essence of the writer’s character. It gives the author transfigured, and does not represent all the stains and distortions which he may have received in his progress through the world. In real life we might have been repelled by Milton’s stern Puritanism, or by some outbreak of rather testy self-assertion. In reading *Paradise Lost*, we feel only the loftiness of character, and are raised and inspirited by sentiments, without pausing to consider the particular application.

If this be true in some degree of all imaginative writers, it is especially true of humourists. For humour is essentially the expression of a personal idiosyncrasy, and a man is a humorist just because the tragic and the comic elements of life present themselves to his mind in new and unexpected combinations. The objects of other men’s reverence strike him from the ludicrous point of view, and he sees something attractive in the things which they affect to despise. It is his function to strip off the commonplaces by which we have tacitly agreed to cover over our

doubts and misgivings, and to explode empty pretences by the touch of a vigorous originality; and therefore it is that the great mass of mankind are apt to look upon humour of the stronger flavour with suspicion. They suspect the humorist—not without reason—of laughing at their beards. There is no saying where he may not explode next. They can enjoy the mere buffoonery which comes from high spirits combined with thoughtlessness. And they can fairly appreciate the gentle humour of Addison or Goldsmith, or Charles Lamb, where the kindness of the intention is so obvious that the irony is felt to be harmless. It represents only the tinge of melancholy which every good man must feel at the sight of human folly, and is used rather to light up by its gentle irradiation the amiable aspects of weakness than to unmask solemn affectation and successful hypocrisy. As soon as the humourist begins to be more pungent, and the laughter to be edged with scorn and indignation, good quiet people who do not like to be shocked begin to draw back. They are half ashamed when a Cervantes or a Montaigne, a Rabelais or a Swift, takes them into his confidence, and proposes in the true humourist's spirit to but show them the ugly realities of the world or of his own mind. They shrink from the exposure which follows of the absurdity of herbes, the follies of the wise, the cruelty and injustice of the virtuous. In their hearts they take this daring frankness for sheer cynicism, and reject his proffered intimacy. They would rather overlook the hollowness of established conventions, than have them ruthlessly exposed by the sudden audacity of these daring rebels. To the man, on the contrary, who is predisposed to sympathy by some affinity of character, the sudden flash of genuine feeling is infinitely refreshing. He rejoices to see theories confronted with facts, solemn conventions turned inside out, and to have the air cleared by a sudden burst of laughter, though it may occasionally have something rather savage in it. He welcomes the discovery that another man has dared to laugh at the idols before which we are all supposed to bow in solemn reverence. We love the humour in short so far as we shall the character from which it flows. Everybody can love the spirit which shows itself in the *Essays on Elia*; but you can hardly love the *Tale of a Tub* or *Gulliver* unless you have a sympathy with the genuine Swift which overpowers your occasional disgust at his misanthropy. But to this general rule there is one marked exception in our literature. It is impossible for any one with the remotest taste for literary excellence to read *Tristram Shandy* or the *Sentimental Journey* without a sense of wondering admiration. One can hardly read the familiar passages without admitting that Sterne was perhaps the greatest artist in the language. No one at least shows more inimitable felicity in producing a pungent effect by a few touches of exquisite precision. He gives the impression that the thing has been done once for all; he has hit the bull's eye round which inspiring marksmen go on blundering indefinitely without any satisfying success. Two or three of the scenes in which Uncle Toby expressed his sentiments are as perfect in their way as the

half-dozen lines in which Mrs. Quickly describes the end of Falstaff and convince us that three strokes from a man of genius may be worth more than the life's labour of the cleverest of skilled literary workmen. And it may further be said that Uncle Toby, like his kinsmen in the world of humour, is an incarnation of most lovable qualities. In going over the list, a short list in any case, of the immortal characters in fiction, there is hardly any one in our literature who would be entitled to take precedence of him. To find a distinctly superior type, we must go back to Cervantes, whom Sterne idolised and professed to take for his model. But to speak of a character as in some sort comparable to Don Quixote, though without any thought of placing him on the same level, is to admire that he is a triumph of art. Indeed, if we take the other creator of types, of whom it is only permitted to speak with bated breath, we must agree that it would be difficult to find a figure even in the Shakespearean gallery more admirable in its way. Of course, the creation of a Hamlet, an Iago, or a Falstaff implies an intellectual intensity and reach of imaginative sympathy altogether different from anything which his warmest admirers would attribute to Sterne. I only say that there is no single character in Shakespeare whom we see more vividly and love more heartily than Mr. Shandy's uncle.

It should follow, according to the doctrine just set forth, that we ought to love Uncle Toby's creator. But here I fancy that everybody will be sensible of a considerable difficulty. The judgment pronounced upon Sterne by Thackeray seems to me to be substantially unimpeachable. The more I know of the man, for my part, the less I like him. It is impossible to write his biography (from the admiring point of view) without making it a continuous apology. His faults may be extenuated by the customary devices; but there is a terrible lack of any positive merits to set against them. He seems to have been fond of his daughter, and tolerant of his wife. The nearest approach to a good action recorded of him is that when they preferred remaining in France to following him to England, he took care that they should have the income which he had promised. The liberality was nothing very wonderful. He knew that his wife was severely economical, as she had good reason to be; inasmuch as his own health was most precarious, and he was spending his income with a generous freedom which left her in destitution at his death. Still we are glad to give him all credit for not being a grudging paymaster. Some better men have been less good-natured. The rest of his panegyric consists of excuses for his shortcomings. We know the regular formulæ. He had bad companions, it is said, in his youth. Men who show a want of principle in later life have a knack of picking up bad companions at their outset. We are reminded as usual that the morals of the time were corrupt. It is a very difficult question how far this is true. We can only make a rough guess as to the morals of our own time; some people can see steady improvement, where others see nothing but signs of growing

corruption ; but when we come to speak of the morals of an age more or less removed, there are so many causes of illusion that our estimates have very small title to respect. It is no doubt true that the clergy of the Church of England in Sterne's day took a less exalted view than they now do of their own position and duties ; that they were frequently pluralists and absentees ; that patrons had small sense of responsibility ; and that, as a general rule, the spiritual teachers of the country took life easily, and left an ample field for the activity of Wesley and his followers. But, making every allowance for this, it would be grossly unfair to deny, what is plainly visible in all the memoirs of the time, that there were plenty of honest squires and persons in every part of the country leading wholesome domestic lives.

But, in any case, such apologies rather explain how a man came to be bad, than prove that he was not bad. They would show at most that we were making an erroneous inference if we inferred badness of heart from conduct which was not condemned by the standard of his own day. This argument, however, is really inapplicable. Sterne's faults were of a kind for which if anything there was less excuse then than now. The faults of his best known contemporaries, of men like Fielding, Smollett, or Churchill, were the faults of robust temperament with an excess of animal passions. Their coarseness has left a stain upon their pages as it injured their lives. But, however much we may lament or condemn, we do not feel that such men were corrupt at heart. And that, unfortunately, is just what we are tempted to feel about Sterne. When the huge, brawny parson, Churchill, felt his unfitness for clerical life, he pitched his cassock to the dogs and blossomed out in purple and gold. He set the respectabilities at defiance, took up with Wilkes and the reprobates, and roared out full-mouthed abuse against bishops and ministers. He could still be faithful to his friends, observe his own code of honour, and do his best to make some atonement to the victims of his misconduct. Sterne, one feels, differs from Churchill not really as being more virtuous, but in not having the courage to be so openly vicious. Unlike Churchill he could be a consummate sneak. He was quite as ready to flatter Wilkes or to be on intimate terms with atheists and libertines, with Holbach and Cr  billon, when his bishop and his parishioners could not see him. His most intimate friend from early days was John Hall Stevenson—the country squire whose pride it was to ape in the provinces the orgies of the monks of Medmenham Abbey, and once notorious as the author of a grossly indecent book. The dog Latin letter in which Sterne informs this chosen companion that he is weary of his life, contains other remarks sufficiently significant of the nature of their intimacy. The age was not very nice ; but it was quite acute enough to see the objections to a close alliance between a married ecclesiastic of forty-five\* and the rustic Don Juan of the district. But his

\* Sterne says in the letter that Hall was over forty ; and he was five years older than Hall.

cynicism becomes doubly disgusting when we remember that Sterne was all the time as eager as any patronage hunter to ingratiate himself into the good graces of bishops. Churchill, we remember, lampooned Warburton with savage ferocity. Sterne tried his best to conciliate the most conspicuous prelate of the day. He never put together a more elaborately skilful bit of writing than the letter which he wrote to Garrick, with the obvious intention that it should be shown to Warburton. He humbly says that he has no claim to an introduction, except "what arises from the honour and respect which, in the progress of my work, will be shown the world I owe so great a man." The statement was probably meant to encounter a suspicion which Warburton entertained that he was to be introduced in a ridiculous character in *Tristram Shandy*. The bishop was sufficiently soothed to administer not only good advice but a certain purse of gold, which had an unpleasant resemblance to hush-money. It became evident, however, that the author of *Tristram Shandy* was not a possible object of episcopal patronage; and, indeed, he was presently described by the bishop as an "irrevocable scoundrel." Sterne's "honour and respect" never found expression in his writings; but he ingeniously managed to couple the *Divine Legation*—the work which had justified Warburton's elevation to the bench—with the *Tale of a Tub*, the audacious satire upon orthodox opinions, which had been an insuperable bar to Swift's preferment. The insinuation had its sting, for there were plenty of critics in those days who maintained that Warburton's apology was really more damaging to the cause of orthodoxy than Swift's burlesque. We cannot resist the conviction that if Warburton had been more judicious in his distribution of patronage, he would have received a very different notice in return. The blow from Churchill's bludgeon was, on any right, given by an open enemy. This little stab came from one who had been a servile flatterer.

No doubt Sterne is to be pitied for his uncongenial position. The relations who kindly took him off the hands of his impecunious father could provide for him most easily in the Church; and he is not the only man who has been injured by being forced by such considerations into a career for which he was unfitted. In the same way we may pity him for having become tired of his wife when he seems to have married under a generous impulse—she was no doubt a very tiresome woman—and try to forgive him for some of his flirtations. But it is not so easy to forgive the spirit in which he conducted them. One story, as related by an admiring biographer, will be an amply sufficient specimen. He fell in love with a Miss Fourmantelle, who was living at York when he was finishing the first volumes of *Tristram Shandy* at the ripe age of forty-six. He introduced her into that work as "dear, dear Jenny." He writes to her in his usual style of lovemaking. He swears that he loves her "to distraction," and will love her "to eternity." He declares that there is "only one obstacle to their happiness"—obviously Mrs. Sterne—and solemnly prays to God that she may so live and love him as one day to

share in his great good fortune. Precisely similar aspirations, we note in passing, were to be soon afterwards addressed to Mrs. Draper, on the hypothesis that two obstacles to their happiness might be removed, namely, Mr. Draper and Mrs. Sterne. Few readers are likely to be edified by the sacred language used by a clergyman on such an occasion; though biographical zeal has been equal even to this emergency. But the sequel to the Fourmantelle story is the really significant part. Mr. Sterne goes to London to reap the social fruits of his amazing success with *Tristram Shandy*. The whole London world falls at his feet; he is overwhelmed with invitations, and deafened with flattery; and poor literary drudges like Goldsmith are scandalised by so overpowering a triumph. Nobody had thought it worth while to make a fuss about the author of the *Vicar of Wakefield*. Sterne writes the accounts of his unprecedented success to Miss Fourmantelle: he snatches moments in the midst of his crowded lèvées to tell her that he is hers for ever and ever, that he would "give a guinea for a squeeze of her hand;" and promises to use his influence in some affair in which she is interested. Hereupon Miss Fourmantelle follows him to London. She finds him so deeply engaged, that he cannot see her from Sunday till Friday; though he is still good enough to say that he would wish to be with her always, were it not for "fate." And, hereupon, Miss Fourmantelle vanishes out of history, and Mr. Sterne ceases to trouble his head about her. It needs only to be added that this is but one episode in Sterne's career out of several of which the records have been accidentally preserved. Mrs. Draper seems to have been the most famous case; but, according to his own statement, he had regularly on hand some affair of the sort, and is proud of the sensibility which they indicate.

Upon such an occurrence only one comment is possible from the moralist's point of view, namely, that a brother of Miss Fourmantelle, had she possessed a brother, would have been justified in administering a horsewhipping. I do not, however, wish to preach a sermon upon Sterne's iniquities, or to draw any edifying conclusions upon the present occasion. We have only to deal with the failings of the man so far as they are reflected in the author. Time enables us to abstract and distinguish. A man's hateful qualities may not be of the essence of his character, or they may be only hateful in certain specific relations which do not now affect us. Moreover, there is some kind of immorality—spite and uncharitableness, for example—which is not without its charm. Pope was in many ways a far worse man than Sterne; he was an incomparably more elaborate liar, and the amount of gall with which his constitution was saturated would have been enough to furnish a whole generation of Sternes. But we can admire the brilliance of Pope's epigrams, without bothering ourselves with the reflection that he told a whole series of falsehoods as to the date of their composition. We can enjoy the pungency of his indignant satire without asking whether it was directed against deserving objects. Atticus was perhaps a very cruel caricature of Addison; but the lines upon Atticus remain as an in-

comparably keen dissection of a type which need not have been embodied in this particular representative. Some people, indeed, may be too virtuous or tender-hearted to enjoy any exposure of human weakness. I make no pretensions to such amiability, and I can admire the keenness of the wasp's sting when it is no longer capable of touching me and my friends. Indeed, almost any genuine ebullition of human passion is interesting in its way, and it would be pedantic to be scandalised whenever it is rather more vehement than a moralist would approve, or happens to break out on the wrong occasion. The reader can apply the correction for himself; he can read satire in his moments of virtuous indignation, and twist it in his own mind against some of those people—they are generally to be found—who really deserve it. But the case is different when the sentiment itself is offensive, and offensive by reason of insincerity. When the very thing by which we are supposed to be attracted is the goodness of a man's heart, a suspicion that he was a mere Tartuffe cannot enter our minds without injuring our enjoyment. We may continue to admire the writer's technical skill, but he cannot fascinate us unless he persuades us of his sincerity. One might, to take a parallel case, admire Reynolds for his skill of hand and fine perception of form and colour, if he had used them only to represent objects as repulsive as the most hideous scenes in Hogarth. One loves him, because of the exquisite tenderness of nature implied in the representations of infantile beauty. And if it were possible to feel that this tenderness was a mere sham that his work was that of a dexterous artist skilfully flattering the fondness of parents, the charm would vanish. The children would breathe affectation instead of simplicity, and provoke only a sardonic sneer, which is suggested by most of the infantile portraits collected in modern exhibitions.

It is with something of this feeling that we read Sterne. Of the literary skill there cannot be a moment's question; but if we for a moment yield to the enchantment, we feel ashamed, at the next moment, of our weakness. We have been moved on false pretences; and we seem to see the sham Yorick with that unpleasant leer upon his too expressive face, chuckling quietly at his successful imposition. It is no wonder if many of his readers have revolted, and even been provoked to an excessive reaction of feeling. The criticism was too obvious to be missed. Horace Walpole indulged in a characteristic sneer at the genius who neglected a mother and snivelled over a dead donkey. (The neglect of a mother, we may note in passing, is certainly not proven.) Walpole was too much of a cynic, it may be said, to distinguish between sentimentalism and genuine sentiment, or rather so much of a cynic that one is surprised at his not liking the sentimentalism more. But Goldsmith at least was a man of real feeling, and as an artist in some respects superior even to Sterne. He was moved to his bitterest outburst of satire by *Tristram Shandy*. He despised the charlatan who eked out his defects of humour by the paltry mechanical devices of blank pages, dis-

ordered chapters, and a profuse indulgence in dashes. He pointed out with undeniable truth the many grievous stains by which Sterne's pages are defaced. He spoke with disgust of the ladies who worshipped the author of a book which they should have been ashamed to read, and found the whole secret of Sterne's success in his pertness and indecency. Goldsmith may have been yielding unconsciously to a not unnatural jealousy, and his criticism certainly omits to take into account Sterne's legitimate claims to admiration. It is happily needless to insist at the present day upon the palpable errors by which the delicate and pure-minded Goldsmith was offended. It is enough to indulge in a passing word of regret that a man of Sterne's genius should have descended so often to mere buffoonery or to the most degrading methods of meeting his reader's interest. The *Sentimental Journey* is a book of simply marvellous cleverness, to which one can find no nearer parallel than Heine's *Reisebilder*. But one often closes it with a mixture of disgust and regret. The disgust needs no explanation; the regret is caused by our feeling that something has been missed which ought to have been in the writer's power. He has so keen an eye for picturesque effects; he is so sensitive to a thousand little incidents which your ordinary traveller passes with eyes riveted to his guide-book, or which "Smelfungus" Smollett disregarded in his surly British pomposity; he is so quick at appreciating some delicate courtesy in humble life or some pathetic touch of commonplace suffering, that one grows angry when he spoils a graceful scene by some prurient double meaning, and wastes whole pages in telling a story fit only for John Hall Stevenson. One feels that one has been rambling with a discreditable parson, who is so glad to be free from the restraints of his parish or of Mrs. Sterne's company, that he is always peeping into forbidden corners, and anxious to prove to you that he is as knowing in the ways of a wicked world as a raffish undergraduate enjoying a stolen visit to London. Goldsmith's idyllic pictures of country life may be a little too rose-coloured, but at least they are harmonious. Sterne's sudden excursions into the nauseous are like the brutal practical jokes of a dirty boy who should put filth into a scent-bottle. One feels that if he had entered the rustic paradise, of which Dr. and Mrs. Primrose were the Adam and Eve, half his sympathies would have been with the wicked Squire Thornhill; he would have been quite as able to suit that gentleman's tastes as to wheedle the excellent Vicar; and his homage to Miss Olivia would have partaken of the nature of an insult. A man of Sterne's admirable delicacy of genius, writing always with an eye to the canons of taste approved in Crazy Castle, must necessarily produce painful discords, and throw away admirable workmanship upon contemptible ribaldry. But the very feeling proves that there was really a finer element in him. Had he been thoroughly steeped in the noxious element, there would have been no discord. We might simply have set him down as a very clever reprobate. But, with some exceptions, we can generally recognise something so amiable and attractive as to excite our regret for the waste

of genius even in his more questionable passages. Coleridge points out, with his usual critical acuteness, that much of *Tristram Shandy* would produce simple disgust were it not for the presence of that wonderful group of characters who are antagonistic to the spurious wit based upon simple shocks to a sense of decency. That group redeems the book, and we may say that it is the book. We must therefore admit that the writer of Uncle Toby and his families must not be unreservedly condemned. To admit that one thoroughly dislikes Sterne is not to assert that he was a thorough hypocrite of the downright Tartuffe variety. His good feelings must be something more than a mere sham or empty formula: they are not a flimsy veil thrown over degrading selfishness or sensuality. When he is attacked upon this ground, his apologists may have an easy triumph. The true statement is rather that Sterne was a man who understood to perfection the art of enjoying his own good feelings as a luxury without humbling himself to translate them into practice. This is the definition of sentimentalism when the word is used in a bad sense. Many admirable teachers of mankind have held the doctrine that all artistic indulgence is universally immoral, because it is all more or less obnoxious to this objection. So far as a man saves up his good feelings merely to use them as the raw material of poems, he is wasting a force which ought to be applied to the improvement of the world. What have we to do with singing and painting when there are so many of our fellow-creatures whose sufferings might be relieved and whose characters might be purified if we turned our songs into sermons, and, instead of staining canvas, they tried to purify the dwellings of the poor? There is a good deal to be said for the thesis that all fiction is really a kind of lying, and that art in general is a luxurious indulgence, to which we have no right whilst crime and disease are rampant in the outer world.

I think, indeed, that I could detect some flaws in the logic by which this conclusion is supported, but I confess that it often seems to possess a considerable plausibility. The peculiar sentimentalism of which Sterne was one of the first mouthpieces, would supply many effective illustrations of the argument; for it is a continuous manifestation of extraordinary skill in providing "sweet poison for the ages' tooth." He was exactly the man for his time, though, indeed, so clever a man would probably have been equally able to flatter the prevailing impulse of any time in which his lot had been cast. M. Taine has lately described with great skill the sort of fashion of philanthropy which became popular among the upper classes in France in the pre-revolutionary generation. The fine ladies and gentlemen who were so soon to be crushed as tyrannical oppressors of the people, had really a strong impression that benevolence was a branch of social elegance which ought to be assiduously cultivated by persons of taste and refinement. A similar tendency, though less strongly marked, is observable amongst the corresponding class in English society. From causes which may be analysed by his-

torians, the upper social stratum was becoming penetrated with a vague discontent with the existing order and a desire to find new outlets for emotional activity. Between the reign of comfortable common sense, represented by Pope and his school, and the fierce outbreak of passion which accompanied the crash of the revolution, there was an interregnum marked by a semi-conscious fore-feeling of some approaching catastrophe; a longing for fresh excitement, and tentative excursions into various regions of thought, which have since been explored in a more systematic fashion. Sentimentalism was the word which represented one phase of this inarticulate longing, and which expresses pretty accurately the need of having some keen sensations without very well knowing in what particular channels they were to be directed. The growth of the feminine influence in literature had no doubt some share in this development. Women were no longer content to be simply the pretty fools of the *Spectator*, unworthy to learn the Latin grammar or to be admitted to the circle of wits; though they seldom presumed to be independent authors, they were of sufficient importance to have a literature composed for their benefit. The sentimentalism of the worthy Richardson implied a discovery of one means of turning this tendency to account, and in his little circle of feminine adorers we find one of the earliest discussions of the word.

"What," asks Lady Bradshaigh (writing to him about 1749), "is the meaning of the word sentimental, so much in vogue amongst the polite, both in town and country? In letters and common conversations I have asked several who made use of it, and have generally received for answer, it is—it is—*sentimental*. Everything clever and agreeable is comprehended in that word; but I am convinced a wrong interpretation is given, because it is impossible everything clever or agreeable can be so common as this word. I am frequently astonished to hear such a one is a *sentimental* man; we were a *sentimental* party; I have been taking a *sentimental* walk." Some time earlier Sterne was writing a love letter to his future wife, lamenting his "quiet and sentimental repasts" which they had had together, and weeping "like a child" (so he writes) at the sight of his single knife and fork and plate. The growth of such phrases is often an interesting symptom of new currents of social development. Richardson might have replied by pointing to the history of Clarissa, which represents a respectable, moral, and domestic sentimentalism; and Rousseau expressed it a little later in a more dangerous and revolutionary embodiment. We have known the same spirit in many incarnations in later days. We have been bored by Wertherism; by the Byronic misanthropy; by the *Weltenschmerz* of our German cousins; and by the aesthetic raptures or the pessimist lamentations of our modern poets. But Sterne, who made the word popular in literature, represents what may be considered as sentimentalism in its purest form; that which corresponds most closely to its definition as sentiment running to waste; for in Sterne there is no thought of any moral, or political, or philoso-

phical application. He is as entirely free as a man can be from any suspicion of "purpose." He tells us as frankly as possible that he is simply putting on the cap and bells for our amusement. He must weep and laugh just as the fancy takes him ; his pen, he declares, is the master of him, not he the master of his pen. This, being interpreted, means of course something rather different from its obvious sense. Nobody, it is abundantly clear, could be a more careful and deliberate artist, though he aims at giving a whimsical and arbitrary appearance to his most skilfully devised effects. The author Sterne has a thorough command of his pen ; he only means that the parson Sterne is not allowed to interfere in the management. He has no doctrine which he is in the least ambitious of expounding. He does not even wish to tell us, like some of his successors, that the world is out of joint ; that happiness is a delusion, and misery the only reality ; nor what often comes to just the same thing, is he anxious to be optimistic, and to declare, in the vein of some later humorists, that the world should be regarded through a rose-coloured mask, and that a little effusion of benevolence will summarily remove all its rough places. Undoubtedly it would be easy to argue—were it worth the trouble—that Sterne's peculiarities of temperament would have rendered certain political and religious teachings more congenial to him than others. But he did not live in stirring times, when every man is forced to translate his temperament by a definite creed. He could be as thoroughgoing and consistent an Epicurean as he pleased. Nothing matters very much (that seems to be his main doctrine), so long as you possess a good temper, a soft heart, and have a flirtation or two with pretty women. Though both men may be called sentimentalists, Sterne must have regarded Rousseau's vehement social enthusiasm as so much insanity. The poor man took life in desperate circumstances, and instead of keeping his sensibility to warm his own hearth, wanted to set the world on fire. When rambling through France, Sterne had an eye for every pretty vignette by the roadside, for peasants' dances, for begging monks, or smart Parisian grisettes ; he received and repaid the flattery of the drawing-rooms, and was, one may suppose, as absolutely indifferent to omens of coming difficulties as any of the freethinking or free-living abbés, who were his most congenial company. Horace Walpole was no philosopher, but he shook his head in amazement over the audacious scepticism of French society. Sterne, so far as one can judge from his letters, saw and heard nothing in this direction ; and one would as soon expect to find a reflection upon such matters in the *Sentimental Journey* as to come upon a serious discussion of theological controversy in *Tristram Shandy*. Now and then some such question just shows itself for an instant in the background. A negro wanted him to write against slavery ; and the letter came just as Trim was telling a pathetic story to Uncle Toby, and suggesting doubtfully that a black might have a soul. "I am not much versed, Corporal," quoth my Uncle Toby, "in things of that kind ; but I suppose God would not have made him without one any more than thee

or me." Sterne was quite ready to aid the cause of emancipation by adding as many picturesque touches as he could devise to Uncle Toby or sentimentalising over jackdaws and prisoners in the *Sentimental Journey*; but more direct agitation would have been as little in his line as travelling through France in the spirit of Arthur Young to collect statistics about rent and wages. Sterne's sermons, to which one might possibly turn with a view to discovering some serious opinions, are not without an interest of their own. They show touches of the Shandy style and efforts to escape from the dead level. But Sterne could not be really at home in the pulpit, and all that can be called original is an occasional infusion of a more pungent criticism of life into the moral commonplaces of which sermons were then chiefly composed. The sermon on Tristram Shandy supplies a happy background to Uncle Toby's comments; but even Sterne could not manage to interweave them into the text.

The very essence of the Shandy character implies this absolute disengagement from all actual contact with sublunary affairs. Neither Fielding nor Goldsmith can be accused of preaching in the objectionable sense; they do not attempt to supply us with pamphlets in the shape of novels, but in so far as they draw from real life they inevitably suggest some practical conclusions. Reformers, for example, might point to the prison experiences of Dr. Primrose or of Captain Booth, as well as to the actual facts which they represent; and Smollett's account of the British navy is a more valuable historical document than any quantity of official reports. But in Uncle Toby's bowling-green we have fairly shut the door upon the real world. We are in a region as far removed from the prosaic fact as in Aladdin's wondrous subterranean garden. We mount the magical hobby-horse, and straightway are in an enchanted land, "as though of hemlock we had drunk," and if the region is not altogether so full of delicious perfume as that haunted by Keats's nightingale, and even admits occasional puffs of rather unsavoury odours, it has a singular and characteristic influence of its own. Uncle Toby, so far as his intellect is concerned, is a full-grown child; he plays with his toys, and rejoices over the manufacture of cannon from a pair of jack boots, precisely as if he were still in petticoats; he lives in a continuous daydream framed from the materials of adult experience, but as unsubstantial as any childish fancies; and when he speaks of realities it is with the voice of one half-awake, and in whose mind the melting vision still blends with the tangible realities. Mr. Shandy has a more direct and conscious antipathy to reality. The actual world is commonplace; the events there have a trick of happening in obedience to the laws of nature; and people not unfrequently feel what one might have expected beforehand that they would feel. One can express them in cut and dried formulæ. Mr. Shandy detests this monotony. He differs from the ordinary pedant in so far as he values theories not in proportion to their dusty antiquity, but in proportion to their unreality, the pure whimsicality and irrationality of the heads which contained them. He is a sort of inverted

philosopher, who loves the antithesis of the reasonable as passionately as your commonplace philosopher professes to love the reasonable. He is ready to welcome a *reductio ad absurdum* for a demonstration ; yet he values the society of men of the ordinary turn of mind precisely because his love of oddities makes him relish a contradiction. He is enabled to enjoy the full flavour of his preposterous notions by the reaction of other men's astonished common sense. The sensation of standing upon his head is intensified by the presence of others in the normal position. He delights in the society of the pragmatic and contradictory Dr. Slop, because Slop is like a fish always ready to rise at the bait of a palpable paradox, and quite unable to see with the prosaic humorist that paradoxes are the salt of philosophy. Poor Mrs. Shandy drives him to distraction by the detestable acquiescence with which she receives his most extravagant theories, and the consequent impossibility of ever (in the vulgar phrase) getting a rise out of her.

A man would be priggish indeed who could not enjoy this queer region where all the sober proprieties of ordinary logic are as much inverted as in Alice's Wonderland ; where the only serious occupation of a good man's life is in playing an infantile game ; where the passion of love is only introduced as a passing distraction when the hobby-horse has accidentally fallen out of gear ; where the death of a son merely supplies an affectionate father with a favourable opportunity for airing his queer scraps of outworn moralities, and the misnaming of an infant casts him into a fit of profound melancholy ; where everything, in short, is topsy-turvy, and we are invited to sit down, consuming a perpetual pipe in an old-fashioned arbour, dreamily amusing ourselves with the grotesque shapes that seem to be projected, in obedience to no perceptible law, upon the shifting wreaths of smoke. It would be as absurd to lecture the excellent brothers upon the absurdity of their mode of life as to preach morality to the manager of a *Punch* show, or to demand sentiment in the writer of a mathematical treatise. "I believe in my soul," says Sterne, rather audaciously, "that the hand of the supreme Maker and Designer of all things never made or put a family together, where the characters of it were cast and contrasted with so dramatic a felicity as ours was, for this end ; or in which the capacities of affording such exquisite scenes, and the powers of shifting them perpetually from morning to night, were lodged and entrusted with so unlimited a confidence as in the Shandy family." The grammar of the sentence is rather queer, but we can hardly find fault with the substance. The remark is made à propos of Mr. Shandy's attempt to indoctrinate his brother with the true theory of noses, which is prefaced by the profoundly humorous sentence [which expresses the leading article of Mr. Shandy's creed : "Learned men, brother Toby, don't write dialogues upon long noses for nothing." And, in fact, one sees how admirably the simplicity of each brother plays into the eccentricity of the other. The elder Shandy could not have found in the universe a listener more admirably calculated to

act as whetstone for his strangely-constructed wit, to dissent in precisely the right tone, not with a brutal intrusion of common sense, but with the gentle horror of innocent astonishment at the paradoxes, mixed with veneration for the portentous learning of his senior. By looking at each brother alternately through the eyes of his relative, we are insensibly infected with the intense relish which each feels for the cognate excellence of the other. When the characters are once familiar to us, each new episode in the book is a delightful experiment upon the fresh contrasts which can be struck out by skilfully shifting their positions and exchanging the parts of clown and chief actor. The light is made to flash from a new point, as the gem is turned round by skilled hands. Sterne's wonderful dexterity appears in the admirable setting which is thus obtained for his most telling remarks. Many of the most famous sayings, such as Uncle Toby's remark about the fly, or the recording angel, are more or less adapted from other authors, but they come out so brilliantly that we feel that he has shown a full right to property which he can turn to such excellent account. Sayings quite as witty, or still wittier, may be found elsewhere. Some of Voltaire's incomparable epigrams, for example, are keener than Sterne's, but they owe nothing to the Zadig or Candide who supplies the occasion for the remark. They are thrown out in passing, and shine by their intrinsic brilliancy. But when Sterne has a telling remark, he carefully prepares the dramatic situation in which it will have the whole force due to the concentrated effect of all the attendant circumstances. "Our armies swore terribly in Flanders," cried my uncle Toby, "but nothing to this." Voltaire could not have made a happier hit at the excess of the *odium theologicum*, but the saying comes to us armed with the authority of the whole Shandy conclave. We have a vision of the whole party sitting round, each charged with his own peculiar humour. There is Mr. Shandy, whose fancy has been amazingly tickled by the portentous oath of Ernulfus, as regards antiquarian curiosity, and has at once framed a quaint theory of the advantages of profane swearing in order to justify his delight in the tremendous formula. He regards his last odd discovery with the satisfaction of a connoisseur: "I defy a man to swear out of it!" It includes all oaths from that of William the Conqueror to that of the humblest scavenger, and is a perfect institute of swearing collected from all the most learned authorities. And there is the unlucky Dr. Slop, cleverly enticed into the pitfall by Mr. Shandy's simple cunning, and induced to exhibit himself as a monster of ecclesiastical ferocity by thundering forth the sounding anathema at the ludicrously disproportioned case of Obadiah's clumsy knot-tying; and to bring out the full flavour of the grotesque scene, we see it as represented to the childlike intelligence of Uncle Toby, taking it all in sublime seriousness, whistling lillabullero to soothe his nerves under this amazing performance, in sheer wonder at the sudden revelation of the potentialities of human malediction, and compressing his whole character in that admi-

rable cry of wonder, so phrased as to exhibit his innocent conviction that the habits of the armies in Flanders supplied a sort of standard by which the results of all human experience might be appropriately measured, and to even justify it in some degree by the queer felicity of the particular application. A formal lecturer upon the evils of intolerance might argue in a set of treatises upon the light in which such an employment of sacred language would strike the unsophisticated common sense of a benevolent mind. The imaginative humourist sets before us a delicious picture of two or three concrete human beings, and is then able at one stroke to deliver a blow more telling than the keenest flashes of the dry light of the logical understanding. The more one looks into the scene and tries to analyse the numerous elements of dramatic effect to which his total impression is owing, the more one admires the astonishing skill which has put so much significance into a few simple words. The colouring is so brilliant and the touch so firm that one is afraid to put any other work beside it. Nobody before or since has had so clear an insight into the meaning which can be got out of a simple scene by a judicious selection and skilful arrangement of the appropriate surroundings. Sterne's comment upon the mode in which Trim dropped his hat at the peroration of his speech upon Master Bobby's death, affecting even the "fat, foolish scullion," is significant. "Had he flung it, or thrown it, or skimmed it, or squirted it, or let it slip or fall in any possible direction under Heaven—or in the best direction that could have been given to it—had he dropped it like a goose, like a puppy, like an ass, or in doing it, or even after he had done it, had he looked like a fool, like a ninny, like a nincompoop, it had failed, and the effect upon the heart had been lost." Those who would play upon human passions and those who are played upon, or, in Sterne's phrase, those who drive, and those who are driven, like turkeys to market, with a stick and a red clout, are invited to meditate upon Trim's hat; and so may all who may wish to understand the secret of Sterne's art.

It is true, unfortunately, that this singular skill—the felicity with which Trim's cap, or his Montero cap, or Uncle Toby's pipe—is made to radiate eloquence, sometimes leads to a decided bathos. The climax so elaborately prepared too often turns out to be a faded bit of sentimentalism. We rather resent the art which is thrown away to prepare us for the assertion that "When a few weeks will rescue misery out of her distress, I hate the man who can be a churl of them." So we hate the man who can lift his hand upon a woman save in the way of kindness, but we do not want a great writer to adorn that unimpeachable sentiment with all the jewels of rhetoric. It is just in these very critical passages that Sterne's taste is defective, because his feeling is not sound. We are never sure that we can distinguish between the true gems and the counterfeit. When the moment comes at which he suddenly drops the tear of sensibility, he is almost as likely to provoke sneers as sympathy. There is, for example, the famous donkey, and it is curious to

compare the donkey fed with macaroons in the *Tristram Shandy* with the dead donkey of the *Sentimental Journey*, whose weeping master lays a crust of bread on the now vacant bit of his bridle. It is obviously the same donkey, and Sterne has reflected that he can squeeze a little more pathos out of the animal by actually killing him, and providing a sentimental master. It seems to me that, in trying to heighten the effect, he has just crossed the dangerous limit which divides sympathetic from derisive laughter; and whereas the macaroon-fed animal is a possible, straightforward beast, he becomes (as higher beings have done) a humbug in his palpably hypocritical epitaph. Sterne tries his hand in the same way at improving Maria, who is certainly an effective embodiment of the mad young woman who has tried to move us in many forms since the days of Ophelia. In her second appearance, she comes in to utter the famous sentiment about the wind and the shorn lamb. It has become proverbial, and been even credited in the popular mind with a scriptural origin; and considering such a success, one has hardly the right to say that it has gathered a certain sort of banality. Yet it is surely on the extreme verge at which the pathetic melts into the ludicrous. The reflection, however, occurs more irresistibly in regard to that other famous passage about the recording angel. Sterne's admirers held it to be sublime at the time, and he obviously shared the opinion. And it is undeniable that the story of Le Fevre, in which it is the most conspicuous gem, is a masterpiece in its way. No one can read it, or better still, hear it from the lips of a skilful reader, without admitting the marvellous felicity with which the whole scene is presented. Uncle Toby's oath is a triumph fully worthy of Shakespeare. But the recording angel, though he certainly comes in effectively, is a little suspicious to me. It would have been a sacrifice to which few writers could have been equal, to suppress or soften that brilliant climax; and yet, if the angel had been omitted, the passage would, I fancy, have been really stronger. We might have been left to make the implied comment for ourselves. For the angel seems to introduce an unpleasant air as of eighteenth century politeness; we fancy that he would have welcomed a Lord Chesterfield to the celestial mansions with a faultless bow and a dexterous compliment; and somehow he appears, to my imagination at least, apparelled in theatrical gauze and spangles rather than in the genuine angelic costume. Some change passes over every famous passage; the bloom of its first freshness is rubbed off as it is handed from one quoter to another; but where the sentiment has no false ring at the beginning, the colours may grow faint without losing their harmony. In this angel, and some other of Sterne's best-known touches, we seem to feel that the baser metal is beginning to show itself through the superficial enamel.

And this suggests the criticism which must still be made in regard even to the admirable Uncle Toby. Sterne has been called the English Rabelais, and was apparently more ambitious himself of being considered

as an English Cervantes. To a modern English reader he is certainly far more amusing than Rabelais, and he can be appreciated with less effort than Cervantes. But it is impossible to mention these great names without seeing the direction in which Sterne falls short of the highest excellence. We know that, on clearing away the vast masses of buffoonery and ribaldry under which Rabelais was forced, or chose, to hide himself, we come to the profound thinker and powerful satirist. Sterne represents a comparatively shallow vein of thought. He is the mouth-piece of a sentiment which had certainly its importance in so far as it was significant of a vague discontent with things in general, and a desire for more exciting intellectual food. He was so far ready to fool the age to the top of its bent; and in the course of his ramblings he strikes some hard blows at various types of hide-bound pedantry. But he is too systematic a trifler to be reckoned with any plausibility amongst the spiritual leaders of any intellectual movement. In that sense, *Tristram Shandy* is a curious symptom of the existing currents of emotion, but cannot, like the *Emile* or the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, be reckoned as one of the efficient causes. This complete and characteristic want of purpose may indeed be reckoned as a literary merit, so far as it prevented *Tristram Shandy* from degenerating into a mere tract. But the want of intellectual seriousness has another aspect, which comes out when we compare *Tristram Shandy*, for example, with *Don Quixote*. The resemblance, which has been often pointed out (as indeed Sterne is fond of hinting at it himself) consists in this, that in both cases we see loveable characters through a veil of the ludicrous. As *Don Quixote* is a true hero, though he is under a constant hallucination, so Uncle Toby is full of the milk of human kindness, though his simplicity makes him ridiculous to the piercing eyes of common sense. In both cases, it is inferred, the humorist is discharging his true function of showing the loveable qualities which may be associated with a ludicrous outside.

The Don and the Captain both have their hobbies, which they ride with equal zeal, and there is a close analogy between them. Uncle Toby makes his own apology in the famous oration upon war. "What is war," he asks, "but the getting together of quiet and harmless people with swords in their hands, to keep the turbulent and ambitious within bounds? And heaven is my witness, brother Shandy, that the pleasure I have taken in these things, and that infinite delight in particular which has attended my sieges in the bowling-green has arisen within me, and I hope in the Corporal too, from the consciousness that in carrying them on we were answering the great ends of our creation." Uncle Toby's military ardour undoubtedly makes a most piquant addition to his simple-minded benevolence. The fusion of the gentle Christian with the chivalrous devotee of honour is perfect; and the kindest of human beings, who would not hurt a hair of the fly's head, most delicately blended with the gallant soldier who, as Trim avers, would march up to the mouth of a cannon though he saw the match at the very touch-

hole. Should any one doubt the merits of the performance, he might reassure himself by comparing the scene in which Uncle Toby makes the speech, just quoted, with a parallel passage in *The Caxtons*, and realise the difference between extreme imitative dexterity and the point of real genius.

It is only when we compare this exquisite picture with the highest art that we are sensible of its comparative deficiency. The imaginative force of Cervantes is proved by the fact that Don Quixote and his followers have become the accepted symbols of the most profoundly tragic element in human life—of the contrast between the lofty idealism of the mere enthusiast and the sturdy common sense of ordinary human beings—between the utilitarian and the romantic types of character; and as neither aspect of the truth can be said to be exhaustive, we are rightly left with our sympathies equally balanced. The book may be a sad one to those who prefer to be blind; but in proportion as we can appreciate a penetrative insight into the genuine facts of life, we are impressed by this most powerful presentation of the never-ending problem. It is impossible to find in *Tristram Shandy* any central conception of this breadth and depth. If Trim had been as shrewd as Sancho, Uncle Toby would appear like a mere simpleton. Like a child, he requires a thoroughly sympathetic audience, who will not bring his playthings to the brutal test of actual facts. The high and earnest enthusiasm of the Don can stand the contrast of common sense, though at the price of passing into insanity. But Trim is forced to be Uncle Toby's accomplice, or his Commander would never be able to play at soldiers. If Don Quixote had simply amused himself at a mock tournament, and had never been in danger of mistaking a puppet-show for a reality, he would certainly have been more credible, but in the same proportion he would have been commonplace. The whole tragic element, which makes the humour impressive, would have disappeared. Sterne seldom ventures to the limit of the tragic. The bowling-green of Mr. Shandy's parlance is too exclusively a sleepy hollow. The air is never cleared by a strain of lofty sentiment. When Yorick and Eugenius form part of the company, we feel that they are rather too much at home with offensive suggestions. When Uncle Toby's innocence fails to perceive their coarse insinuations, we are credited with clearer perception, and expected to sympathise with the spurious wit which derives its chief zest from the presence of the pure-minded victim. And so Uncle Toby comes to represent that stingless virtue, which never gets beyond the ken or hurts the feelings of the easy-going epicurean. His perceptions are too slow and his temper too mild to resent an indecency as his relative, Colonel Newcome, would have done. He would have been too complacent, even to the outrageous Costigan. He is admirably kind when a comrade falls ill at his door; but his benevolence can exhale itself sufficiently in the intervals of hobby-riding, and his chivalrous temper in fighting over old battles with the Corporal. We feel that he must be growing fat;

that his pulse is flabby and his vegetative functions predominant. When he falls in love with the repulsive (for she is repulsive) widow Wadman, we pity him as we pity a poor soft zoophyte in the clutches of a rapacious crab ; but we have no sense of a wasted life. Even his military ardour seems to present itself to our minds as due to the simple affection which makes his regiment part of his family rather than to any capacity for heroic sentiment. His brain might turn soft ; it would never spontaneously generate the noble madness of a Quixote, though he might have followed that hero with a more canine fidelity than Sancho.

Mr. Matthew Arnold says of Heine, as we all remember, that—

The spirit of the world,  
Beholding the absurdity of men—  
Their vanities, their feats—let a sardonic smile  
For one short moment wander o'er his lips—  
That smile was Heine.

There is a considerable analogy, as one may note in passing, between the two men ; and if Sterne was not a poet, his prose could perhaps be even more vivid and picturesque than Heine's. But his humour is generally wanting in the quality suggested by Mr. Arnold's phrase. We cannot represent it by a sardonic smile, or indeed by any other expression which we can very well associate with the world-spirit. The imaginative humourist must in all cases be keenly alive to the "absurdity of man ;" he must have a sense of the irony of fate, of the strange interlacing of good and evil in the world, and of the baser and nobler elements in human nature. He will be affected differently according to his temperament and his intellectual grasp. He may be most impressed by the affinity between madness and heroism ; by the waste of noble qualities on trifling purposes ; and, if he be more amiable, by the goodness which may lurk under ugly forms. He may be bitter and melancholy, or simply serious in contemplating the fantastic tricks played by mortals before high heaven. But, in any case, some real undercurrent of deeper feeling is essential to the humourist who impresses us powerfully, and who is equally far from mere buffoonery and sentimental foppery. His smile must be at least edged with melancholy, and his pathos too deep for mere "snivelling."

Sterne is often close to this loftier region of the humorous ; sometimes he fairly crosses it ; but his step is uncertain as of one not feeling at home. The absurdity of man does not make him "sardonic." He takes things too easily. He shows us the farce of life, and feels that there is a tragical background to it all ; but somehow he is not usually much disposed to cry over it, and he is obviously proud of the tears which he manages to produce. The thought of human folly and suffering does not usually torment and perplex him. The highest humourist should be the laughing and weeping philosopher in one ; and in Sterne the weeping philosopher is always a bit of a humbug. The pedantry of the elder Shandy is a simple whim, not a misguided aspiration ; and Sterne

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is so amused with his oddities that he even allows him to be obtrusively heartless. Uncle Toby undoubtedly comes much nearer to complete success; but he wants just that touch of genuine pathos which he would have received from the hands of the present writer. But the performance is so admirable in the last passages, where Sterne can drop his buffoonery and his indecency, that even a criticism which sets him below the highest place seems almost unfair.

And this may bring us back for a moment to the man himself. Sterne avowedly drew his own portrait in *Yorick*. That clerical jester, he says, was a mere child, full of whim and gaiety, but without an ounce of ballast. He had no more knowledge of the world at 26 than a "romping, unsuspecting girl of 13." His high spirits and frankness were always getting him into trouble. When he heard of a spiteful or ungenerous action he would blurt out that the man was a dirty fellow. He would not stoop to set himself right, but let people think of him what they would. Thus his faults were all due to his extreme candour and impulsiveness. It wants little experience of the world to recognise the familiar portrait of an impulsive and generous fellow. It represents the judicious device by which a man reconciles himself to some very ugly actions. It provides by anticipation a complete excuse for thoughtlessness and meanness. If he is accused of being inconstant, he points out the extreme goodness of his impulses; and if the impulses were bad he argues that at least they did not last very long. He prides himself on his disregard to consequences, even when the consequences may be injurious to his friends. His feelings are so genuine for the moment that his conscience is satisfied without his will translating them into action. He is perfectly candid in expressing the passing phase of sentiment, and therefore does not trouble himself to ask whether what is true to-day will be true to-morrow. He can call an adversary a dirty fellow, and is very proud of his generous indiscretion. But he is also capable of gratifying the dirty fellow's vanity by highflown compliments if he happens to be in the enthusiastic vein; and somehow the providence which watches over the thoughtless is very apt to make his impulses fall in with the dictates of calculated selfishness. He cannot be an accomplished courtier because he is apt to be found out; but he can crawl and creep for the nonce with any one. In real life such a man is often as delightful for a short time as he becomes contemptible on a longer acquaintance. When we think of Sterne as a man, and try to frame a coherent picture of his character, we must give a due weight to the baser elements of his composition. We cannot forget his shallowness of feeling and the utter want of self-respect which prompted him to condescend to be a mere mountebank, and to dabble in filth for the amusement of graceless patrons. Nor is it really possible entirely to throw aside this judgment even in reading his works; for even after abstracting our attention from the rubbish and the indecency, we are haunted in the really admirable parts by our misgivings as to their sincerity. But the problem is often

one to tax critical acumen. It is one aspect of a difficulty which meets us sometimes in real life. Every man flatters himself that he can detect the mere hypocrite. We seem to have a sufficient instinct to warn us against the downright pitfalls, where an absolute void is covered by an artificial stratum of mere verbiage. Perhaps even this is not so easy as we sometimes fancy ; but there is a more refined sort of hypocrisy which requires keener dissection. How are men to draw the narrow and yet all important line which separates—not the genuine from the feigned emotion—but the emotion which is due to some real cause, and that which is a cause in itself? Some people we know fall in love with a woman, and others are really in love with the passion. Grief may be the sign of lacerated affection, or it may be a mere luxury indulged in for its own sake. The sentimentalism which Sterne represented corresponded in the main to this last variety. People had discovered the art of extracting direct enjoyment from their own "sensibility," and Sterne expressly gives thanks for his own as the great consolation of his life. He has the heartiest possible relish for his tears and lamentations, and it is precisely his skill<sup>\*</sup> in marking this vein of interest which gives him his extraordinary popularity. So soon as we discover that a man is enjoying his sorrow our sympathy is killed within us, and for that reason Sterne is apt to be repulsive to humourists whose sense of the human trag-i-comedy is deeper than his own. They agree with him that the vanity of human dreams may suggest a mingling of tears and laughter ; but they grieve because they must, not because they find it a pleasant amusement. Yet it is perhaps unwise to poison our pleasure by reflections of this kind. They come with critical reflection, and may at least be temporarily suppressed when we are reading for enjoyment. We need not sin ourselves by looking a gift-horse in the mouth. The sentiment is genuine at the time. Do not inquire how far it has been deliberately concocted and stimulated. The man is not only a wonderful artist, but he is right in asserting that his impulses are clear and genuine. Why should not that satisfy us? Are we to set up for so rigid a nature that we are never to consent to sit down with Uncle Toby and take him as he is made ? We may wish, if we please, that Sterne had always been in his best, and that his tears flowed from a deeper source. But so long as he really speaks from his heart—and he does so in all the finer parts of the Toby drama—why should we remember that the heart was rather flighty, and regarded with too much conscious complacency by its proprietor ? The Shandyism upon which he prided himself was not a very exalted form of mind, nor one which offered a very deep or lasting satisfaction. Happily we can dismiss an author when we please ; give him a cold shoulder in our more virtuous moods, and have a quiet chat with him when we are graciously pleased to relax. In those times we may admit Sterne as the best of jesters, though it may remain an open question whether the jester is on the whole an estimable institution.

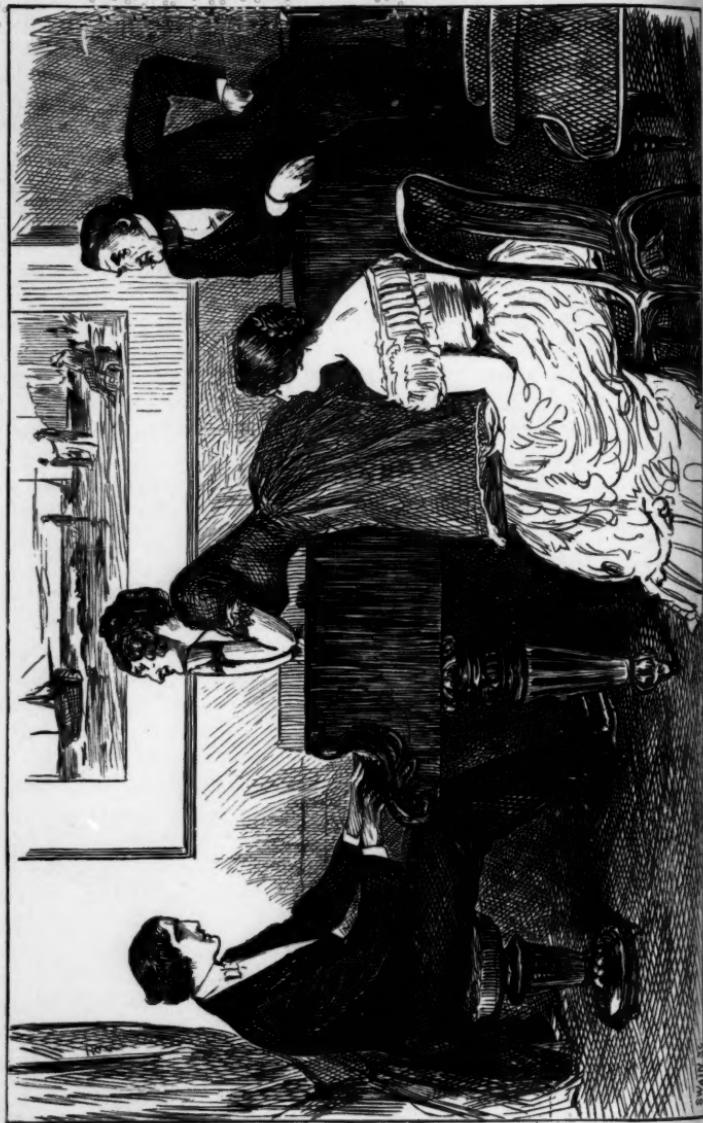
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### VII.



E was, however, by no means so much in earnest as this might seem to indicate; and, indeed, he was more than anything else amused with the whole situation. He was not in the least in a state of tension or of vigilance, with regard to Catherine's prospects; he was even on his guard against the ridicule that might attach it-

self to the spectacle of a house thrown into agitation by its daughter and heiress receiving attentions unprecedented in its annals. More than this, he went so far as to promise himself some entertainment from the little drama—if drama it was—of which Mrs. Penniman desired to represent the ingenious Mr. Townsend as the hero. He had no intention, as yet, of regulating the *dénouement*. He was perfectly willing, as Elizabeth had suggested, to give the young man the benefit of every doubt. There was no great danger in it; for Catherine, at the age of twenty-two, was after all a rather mature blossom, such as could be plucked from the stem only by a vigorous jerk. The fact that Morris Townsend was poor was not of necessity against him; the Doctor had never made up his mind that his daughter should marry a rich man. The fortune she would inherit struck him as a very sufficient provision for two reasonable persons, and if a penniless swain who could give a good account of himself should enter the lists, he should be

\* Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1880, by Henry James, Jr. in the office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington.

judged quite upon his personal merits. There were other things besides. The Doctor thought it very vulgar to be precipitate in accusing people of mercenary motives, inasmuch as his door had as yet not been in the least besieged by fortune-hunters; and, lastly, he was very curious to see whether Catherine might really be loved for her moral worth. He smiled as he reflected that poor Mr. Townsend had been only twice to the house, and he said to Mrs. Penniman that the next time he should come she must ask him to dinner.

He came very soon again, and Mrs. Penniman had of course great pleasure in executing this mission. Morris Townsend accepted her invitation with equal good grace, and the dinner took place a few days later. The Doctor had said to himself, justly enough, that they must not have the young man alone; this would partake too much of the nature of encouragement. So two or three other persons were invited; but Morris Townsend, though he was by no means the ostensible, was the real, occasion of the feast. There is every reason to suppose that he desired to make a good impression; and if he fell short of this result, it was not for want of a good deal of intelligent effort. The Doctor talked to him very little during dinner; but he observed him attentively, and after the ladies had gone out he pushed him the wine and asked him several questions. Morris was not a young man who needed to be pressed, and he found quite enough encouragement in the superior quality of the claret. The Doctor's wine was admirable, and it may be communicated to the reader that while he sipped it Morris reflected that a cellar-full of good liquor—there was evidently a cellar-full here—would be a most attractive idiosyncrasy in a father-in-law. The Doctor was struck with his appreciative guest; he saw that he was not a commonplace young man. "He has ability," said Catherine's father, "decided ability; he has a very good head if he chooses to use it. And he is uncommonly well turned out; quite the sort of figure that pleases the ladies. But I don't think I like him." The Doctor, however, kept his reflections to himself, and talked to his visitors about foreign lands, concerning which Morris offered him more information than he was ready, as he mentally phrased it, to swallow. Dr. Sloper had travelled but little, and he took the liberty of not believing everything that his talkative guest narrated. He prided himself on being something of a physiognomist, and while the young man, chatting with easy assurance, puffed his cigar and filled his glass again, the Doctor sat with his eyes quietly fixed on his bright, expressive face. "He has the assurance of the devil himself," said Morris's host; "I don't think I ever saw such assurance. And his powers of invention are most remarkable. He is very knowing; they were not so knowing as that in my time. And a good head, did I say? I should think so—after a bottle of Madeira, and a bottle and a half of claret!"

After dinner Morris Townsend went and stood before Catherine, who was standing before the fire in her red satin gown.

"He doesn't like me—he doesn't like me at all!" said the young man.

"Who doesn't like you?" asked Catherine.

"Your father; extraordinary man!"

"I don't see how you know," said Catherine, blushing.

"I feel; I am very quick to feel."

"Perhaps you are mistaken."

"Ah, well; you ask him and you will see."

"I would rather not ask him, if there is any danger of his saying what you think."

Morris looked at her with an air of mock melancholy.

"It wouldn't give you any pleasure to contradict him?"

"I never contradict him," said Catherine.

"Will you hear me abused without opening your lips in my defence?"

"My father won't abuse you. He doesn't know you enough."

Morris Townsend gave a loud laugh, and Catherine began to blush again.

"I shall never mention you," she said, to take refuge from her confusion.

"That is very well; but it is not quite what I should have liked you to say. I should have liked you to say: 'If my father doesn't think well of you, what does it matter?'"

"Ah, but it would matter; I couldn't say that!" the girl exclaimed.

He looked at her for a moment, smiling a little; and the Doctor, if he had been watching him just then, would have seen a gleam of fine impatience in the sociable softness of his eye. But there was no impatience in his rejoinder—none, at least, save what was expressed in a little appealing sigh. "Ah, well, then, I must not give up the hope of bringing him round!"

He expressed it more frankly to Mrs. Penniman, later in the evening. But before that he sang two or three songs at Catherine's timid request; not that he flattered himself that this would help to bring her father round. He had a sweet, light tenor voice, and when he had finished, every one made some exclamation—every one, that is, save Catherine, who remained intensely silent. Mrs. Penniman declared that his manner of singing was "most artistic," and Dr. Sloper said it was "very taking—very taking indeed;" speaking loudly and distinctly, but with a certain dryness.

"He doesn't like me—he doesn't like me at all," said Morris Townsend, addressing the aunt in the same manner as he had done the niece. "He thinks I am all wrong."

Unlike her niece, Mrs. Penniman asked for no explanation. She only smiled very sweetly, as if she understood everything; and, unlike Catherine too, she made no attempt to contradict him. "Pray, what does it matter?" she murmured softly.

"Ah, you say the right thing!" said Morris, greatly to the gratification of Mrs. Penniman, who prided herself on always saying the right thing.

The Doctor, the next time he saw his sister Elizabeth, let her know that he had made the acquaintance of Lavinia's *protégé*.

"Physically," he said, "he's uncommonly well set up. As an anatomi-  
st, it is really a pleasure to me to see such a beautiful structure;  
although, if people were all like him, I suppose there would be very little  
need for doctors."

"Don't you see anything in people but their bones?" Mrs. Almond  
rejoined. "What do you think of him as a father?"

"As a father? Thank Heaven I am not his father!"

"No; but you are Catherine's. Lavinia tells me she is in love."

"She must get over it. He is not a gentleman."

"Ah, take care! Remember that he is a branch of the Townsends."

"He is not what I call a gentleman. He has not the soul of one.  
He is extremely insinuating; but it's a vulgar nature. I saw through  
it in a minute. He is altogether too familiar—I hate familiarity. He  
is a plausible coxcomb."

"Ah, well," said Mrs. Almond; "if you make up your mind so  
easily, it's a great advantage."

"I don't make up my mind easily. What I tell you is the result of  
thirty years of observation; and in order to be able to form that judg-  
ment in a single evening, I have had to spend a lifetime in study."

"Very possibly you are right. But the thing is for Catherine to  
see it."

"I will present her with a pair of spectacles!" said the Doctor.

### VIII.

If it were true that she was in love, she was certainly very quiet  
about it; but the Doctor was of course prepared to admit that her  
quietness might mean volumes. She had told Morris Townsend that she  
would not mention him to her father, and she saw no reason to retract  
this vow of discretion. It was no more than decently civil, of course,  
that after having dined in Washington Square, Morris should call  
there again; and it was no more than natural that, having been kindly  
received on this occasion, he should continue to present himself. He  
had had plenty of leisure on his hands; and thirty years ago, in New  
York, a young man of leisure had reason to be thankful for aids to self-  
obliteration. Catherine said nothing to her father about these visits, though  
they had rapidly become the most important, the most absorbing thing  
in her life. The girl was very happy. She knew not as yet what would  
come of it; but the present had suddenly grown rich and solemn. If  
she had been told she was in love, she would have been a good deal sur-  
prised; for she had an idea that love was an eager and exacting passion,  
and her own heart was filled in these days with the impulse of self-  
effacement and sacrifice. Whenever Morris Townsend had left the  
house, her imagination projected itself, with all its strength, into the

idea of his soon coming back ; but if she had been told at such a moment that he would not return for a year, or even that he would never return, she would not have complained nor rebelled, but would have humbly accepted the decree, and sought for consolation in thinking over the times she had already seen him, the words he had spoken, the sound of his voice, of his tread, the expression of his face. Love demands certain things as a right ; but Catherine had no sense of her rights ; she had only a consciousness of immense and unexpected favours. Her very gratitude for these things had hushed itself ; for it seemed to her that there would be something of impudence in making a festival of her secret. Her father suspected Morris Townsend's visits, and noted her reserve. She seemed to beg pardon for it ; she looked at him constantly in silence, as if she meant to say that she said nothing because she was afraid of irritating him. But the poor girl's dumb eloquence irritated him more than anything else would have done, and he caught himself murmuring more than once that it was a grievous pity his only child was a simpleton. His murmurs, however, were inaudible ; and for a while he said nothing to any one. He would have liked to know exactly how often young Townsend came ; but he had determined to ask no questions of the girl herself—to say nothing more to her that would show that he watched her. The Doctor had a great idea of being largely just : he wished to leave his daughter her liberty, and interfere only when the danger should be proved. It was not in his manners to obtain information by indirect methods, and it never even occurred to him to question the servants. As for Lavinia, he hated to talk to her about the matter ; she annoyed him with her mock romanticism. But he had to come to this. Mrs. Penniman's convictions as regards the relations of her niece and the clever young visitor who saved appearances by coming ostensibly for both the ladies—Mrs. Penniman's convictions had passed into a riper and richer phase. There was to be no crudity in Mrs. Penniman's treatment of the situation ; she had become as uncommunicative as Catherine herself. She was tasting of the sweets of concealment ; she had taken up the line of mystery. "She would be enchanted to be able to prove to herself that she is persecuted," said the Doctor ; and when at last he questioned her, he was sure she would contrive to extract from his words a pretext for this belief.

"Be so good as to let me know what is going on in the house," he said to her, in a tone which, under the circumstances, he himself deemed genial.

"Going on, Austin ?" Mrs. Penniman exclaimed. "Why, I am sure I don't know ! I believe that last night the old grey cat had kittens ?"

"At her age ?" said the Doctor. "The idea is startling—almost shocking. Be so good as to see that they are all drowned. But what else has happened ?"

"Ah, the dear little kittens !" cried Mrs. Penniman. "I wouldn't have them drowned for the world !"

The Doctor, the next time he saw his sister Elizabeth, let her know that he had made the acquaintance of Lavinia's *protégé*.

"Physically," he said, "he's uncommonly well set up. As an anatomist, it is really a pleasure to me to see such a beautiful structure; although, if people were all like him, I suppose there would be very little need for doctors."

"Don't you see anything in people but their bones?" Mrs. Almond rejoined. "What do you think of him as a father?"

"As a father? Thank Heaven I am not his father!"

"No; but you are Catherine's. Lavinia tells me she is in love."

"She must get over it. He is not a gentleman."

"Ah, take care! Remember that he is a branch of the Townsends."

"He is not what I call a gentleman. He has not the soul of one. He is extremely insinuating; but it's a vulgar nature. I saw through it in a minute. He is altogether too familiar—I hate familiarity. He is a plausible coxcomb."

"Ah, well," said Mrs. Almond; "if you make up your mind so easily, it's a great advantage."

"I don't make up my mind easily. What I tell you is the result of thirty years of observation; and in order to be able to form that judgment in a single evening, I have had to spend a lifetime in study."

"Very possibly you are right. But the thing is for Catherine to see it."

"I will present her with a pair of spectacles!" said the Doctor.

### VIII.

If it were true that she was in love, she was certainly very quiet about it; but the Doctor was of course prepared to admit that her quietness might mean volumes. She had told Morris Townsend that she would not mention him to her father, and she saw no reason to retract this vow of discretion. It was no more than decently civil, of course, that after having dined in Washington Square, Morris should call there again; and it was no more than natural that, having been kindly received on this occasion, he should continue to present himself. He had had plenty of leisure on his hands; and thirty years ago, in New York, a young man of leisure had reason to be thankful for aids to self-oblivion. Catherine said nothing to her father about these visits, though they had rapidly become the most important, the most absorbing thing in her life. The girl was very happy. She knew not as yet what would come of it; but the present had suddenly grown rich and solemn. If she had been told she was in love, she would have been a good deal surprised; for she had an idea that love was an eager and exacting passion, and her own heart was filled in these days with the impulse of self-effacement and sacrifice. Whenever Morris Townsend had left the house, her imagination projected itself, with all its strength, into the

idea of his soon coming back ; but if she had been told at such a moment that he would not return for a year, or even that he would never return, she would not have complained nor rebelled, but would have humbly accepted the decree, and sought for consolation in thinking over the times she had already seen him, the words he had spoken, the sound of his voice, of his tread, the expression of his face. Love demands certain things as a right ; but Catherine had no sense of her rights ; she had only a consciousness of immense and unexpected favours. Her very gratitude for these things had hushed itself ; for it seemed to her that there would be something of impudence in making a festival of her secret. Her father suspected Morris Townsend's visits, and noted her reserve. She seemed to beg pardon for it ; she looked at him constantly in silence, as if she meant to say that she said nothing because she was afraid of irritating him. But the poor girl's dumb eloquence irritated him more than anything else would have done, and he caught himself murmuring more than once that it was a grievous pity his only child was a simpleton. His murmurs, however, were inaudible ; and for a while he said nothing to any one. He would have liked to know exactly how often young Townsend came ; but he had determined to ask no questions of the girl herself—to say nothing more to her that would show that he watched her. The Doctor had a great idea of being largely just : he wished to leave his daughter her liberty, and interfere only when the danger should be proved. It was not in his manners to obtain information by indirect methods, and it never even occurred to him to question the servants. As for Lavinia, he hated to talk to her about the matter ; she annoyed him with her mock romanticism. But he had to come to this. Mrs. Penniman's convictions as regards the relations of her niece and the clever young visitor who saved appearances by coming ostensibly for both the ladies—Mrs. Penniman's convictions had passed into a riper and richer phase. There was to be no crudity in Mrs. Penniman's treatment of the situation ; she had become as uncommunicative as Catherine herself. She was tasting of the sweets of concealment ; she had taken up the line of mystery. "She would be enchanted to be able to prove to herself that she is persecuted," said the Doctor ; and when at last he questioned her, he was sure she would contrive to extract from his words a pretext for this belief.

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"Ah, the dear little kittens !" cried Mrs. Penniman. "I wouldn't have them drowned for the world !"

Her brother puffed his cigar a few moments in silence. "Your sympathy with kittens, Lavinia," he presently resumed, "arises from a feline element in your own character."

"Cats are very graceful, and very clean," said Mrs. Penniman, smiling.

"And very stealthy. You are the embodiment both of grace and of neatness; but you are wanting in frankness."

"You certainly are not, dear brother."

"I don't pretend to be graceful, though I try to be neat. Why haven't you let me know that Mr. Morris Townsend is coming to the house four times a week?"

Mrs. Penniman lifted her eyebrows. "Four times a week?"

"Three times, then, or five times, if you prefer it. I am away all day, and I see nothing. But when such things happen, you should let me know."

Mrs. Penniman, with her eyebrows still raised, reflected intently. "Dear Austin," she said at last, "I am incapable of betraying a confidence. I would rather suffer anything."

"Never fear; you shall not suffer. To whose confidence is it you allude? Has Catherine made you take a vow of eternal secrecy?"

"By no means. Catherine has not told me as much as she might. She has not been very trustful."

"It is the young man, then, who has made you his confidant? Allow me to say that it is extremely indiscreet of you to form secret alliances with young men. You don't know where they may lead you."

"I don't know what you mean by an alliance," said Mrs. Penniman. "I take a great interest in Mr. Townsend; I won't conceal that. But that's all."

"Under the circumstances, that is quite enough. What is the source of your interest in Mr. Townsend?"

"Why," said Mrs. Penniman, musing, and then breaking into her smile, "that he is so interesting!"

The Doctor felt that he had need of his patience. "And what makes him interesting?—his good looks?"

"His misfortunes, Austin."

"Ah, he has had misfortunes? That, of course, is always interesting. Are you at liberty to mention a few of Mr. Townsend's?"

"I don't know that he would like it," said Mrs. Penniman. "He has told me a great deal about himself—he has told me, in fact, his whole history. But I don't think I ought to repeat those things. He would tell them to you, I am sure, if he thought you would listen to him kindly. With kindness you may do anything with him."

The Doctor gave a laugh. "I shall request him very kindly, then, to leave Catherine alone."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Penniman, shaking her forefinger at her brother, with her little finger turned out, "Catherine has probably said something to him kinder than that!"

"Said that she loved him? Do you mean that?"

Mrs. Penniman fixed her eyes on the floor. "As I tell you, Austin, she doesn't confide in me."

"You have an opinion, I suppose, all the same. It is that I ask you for; though I don't conceal from you that I shall not regard it as conclusive."

Mrs. Penniman's gaze continued to rest on the carpet; but at last she lifted it, and then her brother thought it very expressive. "I think Catherine is very happy; that is all I can say."

"Townsend is trying to marry her—is that what you mean?"

"He is greatly interested in her."

"He finds her such an attractive girl!"

"Catherine has a lovely nature, Austin," said Mrs. Penniman, "and Mr. Townsend has had the intelligence to discover that."

"With a little help from you, I suppose. My dear Lavinia," cried the Doctor, "you are an admirable aunt!"

"So Mr. Townsend says," observed Lavinia, smiling.

"Do you think he is sincere?" asked her brother.

"In saying that?"

"No; that's of course. But in his admiration for Catherine?"

"Deeply sincere. He has said to me the most appreciative, the most charming things about her. He would say them to you, if he were sure you would listen to him—gently."

"I doubt whether I can undertake it. He appears to require a great deal of gentleness."

"He is a sympathetic, sensitive nature," said Mrs. Penniman.

Her brother puffed his cigar again in silence. "These delicate qualities have survived his vicissitudes, eh? All this while you haven't told me about his misfortunes."

"It is a long story," said Mrs. Penniman, "and I regard it as a sacred trust. But I suppose there is no objection to my saying that he has been wild—he frankly confesses that. But he has paid for it."

"That's what has impoverished him, eh?"

"I don't mean simply in money. He is very much alone in the world."

"Do you mean that he has behaved so badly that his friends have given him up?"

"He has had false friends, who have deceived and betrayed him."

"He seems to have some good ones too. He has a devoted sister, and half a dozen nephews and nieces."

Mrs. Penniman was silent a minute. "The nephews and nieces are children, and the sister is not a very attractive person."

"I hope he doesn't abuse her to you," said the Doctor; "for I am told he lives upon her."

"Lives upon her?"

"Lives with her, and does nothing for himself; it is about the same thing."

"He is looking for a position—most earnestly," said Mrs. Penniman.  
"He hopes every day to find one."

"Precisely. He is looking for it here—over there in the front parlour. The position of husband of a weak-minded woman with a large fortune would suit him to perfection!"

Mrs. Penniman was truly amiable, but she now gave signs of temper. She rose with much animation, and stood for a moment looking at her brother. "My dear Austin," she remarked, "if you regard Catherine as a weak-minded woman, you are particularly mistaken!" And with this she moved majestically away.

#### IX.

It was a regular custom with the family in Washington Square to go and spend Sunday evening at Mrs. Almond's. On the Sunday after the conversation I have just narrated, this custom was not intermitted; and on this occasion, towards the middle of the evening, Doctor Sloper found reason to withdraw to the library, with his brother-in-law, to talk over a matter of business. He was absent some twenty minutes, and when he came back into the circle, which was enlivened by the presence of several friends of the family, he saw that Morris Townsend had come in and had lost as little time as possible in seating himself on a small sofa, beside Catherine. In the large room, where several different groups had been formed, and the hum of voices and of laughter was loud, these two young persons might confabulate, as the Doctor phrased it to himself, without attracting attention. He saw in a moment, however, that his daughter was painfully conscious of his own observation. She sat motionless, with her eyes bent down, staring at her open fan, deeply flushed, shrinking together as if to minimise the indiscretion of which she confessed herself guilty.

The Doctor almost pitied her. Poor Catherine was not defiant; she had no genius for bravado, and as she felt that her father viewed her companion's attentions with an unsympathising eye, there was nothing but discomfort for her in the accident of seeming to challenge him. The Doctor felt, indeed, so sorry for her that he turned away, to spare her the sense of being watched; and he was so intelligent a man that, in his thoughts, he rendered a sort of poetic justice to her situation.

"It must be deucedly pleasant for a plain, inanimate girl like that to have a beautiful young fellow come and sit down beside her and whisper to her that he is her slave—if that is what this one whispers. No wonder she likes it, and that she thinks me a cruel tyrant; which of course she does, though she is afraid—she hasn't the animation necessary—to admit it to herself. Poor old Catherine!" mused the Doctor; "I verily believe she is capable of defending me when Townsend abuses me!"

And the force of this reflection, for the moment, was such in making him feel the natural opposition between his point of view and that of an

infatuated child, that he said to himself that he was perhaps after all taking things too hard and crying out before he was hurt. He must not condemn Morris Townsend unheard. He had a great aversion to taking things too hard; he thought that half the discomfort and many of the disappointments of life come from it; and for an instant he asked himself whether, possibly, he did not appear ridiculous to this intelligent young man, whose private perception of incongruities he suspected of being keen. At the end of a quarter of an hour Catherine had got rid of him, and Townsend was now standing before the fireplace in conversation with Mrs. Almond.

"We will try him again," said the Doctor. And he crossed the room and joined his sister and her companion, making her a sign that she should leave the young man to him. She presently did so, while Morris looked at him, smiling, without a sign of evasiveness in his affable eye.

"He's amazingly conceited!" thought the Doctor; and then he said aloud: "I am told you are looking out for a position."

"Oh, a position is more than I should presume to call it," Morris Townsend answered. "That sounds so fine. I should like some quiet work—something to turn an honest penny."

"What sort of thing should you prefer?"

"Do you mean what am I fit for? Very little, I am afraid. I have nothing but my good right arm, as they say in the melodramas."

"You are too modest," said the Doctor. "In addition to your good right arm, you have your subtle brain. I know nothing of you but what I see; but I see by your physiognomy that you are extremely intelligent."

"Ah," Townsend murmured, "I don't know what to answer when you say that! You advise me, then, not to despair?"

And he looked at his interlocutor as if the question might have a double meaning. The Doctor caught the look and weighed it a moment before he replied. "I should be very sorry to admit that a robust and well-disposed young man need ever despair. If he doesn't succeed in one thing, he can try another. Only, I should add, he should choose his line with discretion."

"Ah, yes, with discretion," Morris Townsend repeated, sympathetically. "Well, I have been indiscreet, formerly; but I think I have got over it. I am very steady now." And he stood a moment, looking down at his remarkably neat shoes. Then at last, "Were you kindly intending to propose something for my advantage?" he inquired, looking up and smiling.

"Damn his impudence!" the Doctor exclaimed, privately. But in a moment he reflected that he himself had, after all, touched first upon this delicate point, and that his words might have been construed as an offer of assistance. "I have no particular proposal to make," he presently said; "but it occurred to me to let you know that I have you in my mind,

Sometimes one hears of opportunities. For instance, should you object to leaving New York—to going to a distance?"

"I am afraid I shouldn't be able to manage that. I must seek my fortune here or nowhere. You see," added Morris Townsend, "I have ties—I have responsibilities here. I have a sister, a widow, from whom I have been separated for a long time, and to whom I am almost everything. I shouldn't like to say to her that I must leave her. She rather depends upon me, you see."

"Ah, that's very proper; family feeling is very proper," said Doctor Sloper. "I often think there is not enough of it in our city. I think I have heard of your sister."

"It is possible, but I rather doubt it; she lives so very quietly."

"As quietly, you mean," the Doctor went on, with a short laugh, "as a lady may do who has several young children."

"Ah, my little nephews and nieces—that's the very point! I am helping to bring them up," said Morris Townsend. "I am a kind of amateur tutor; I give them lessons."

"That's very proper, as I say; but it is hardly a career."

"It won't make my fortune!" the young man confessed.

"You must not be too much bent on a fortune," said the Doctor. "But I assure you I will keep you in mind; I won't lose sight of you!"

"If my situation becomes desperate I shall perhaps take the liberty of reminding you!" Morris rejoined, raising his voice a little, with a brighter smile, as his interlocutor turned away.

Before he left the house the Doctor had a few words with Mrs. Almond.

"I should like to see his sister," he said. "What do you call her? Mrs. Montgomery. I should like to have a little talk with her."

"I will try and manage it," Mrs. Almond responded. "I will take the first opportunity of inviting her, and you shall come and meet her. Unless, indeed," Mrs. Almond added, "she first takes it into her head to be sick and to send for you."

"Ah, no, not that; she must have trouble enough without that. But it would have its advantages, for then I should see the children. I should like very much to see the children."

"You are very thorough. Do you want to catechise them about their uncle?"

"Precisely. Their uncle tells me he has charge of their education, that he saves their mother the expense of school-bills. I should like to ask them a few questions in the commoner branches."

"He certainly has not the cut of a schoolmaster!" Mrs. Almond said to herself a short time afterwards, as she saw Morris Townsend in a corner bending over her niece, who was seated.

And there was, indeed, nothing in the young man's discourse at this moment that savoured of the pedagogue.

"Will you meet me somewhere to-morrow or next day?" he said, in a low tone, to Catherine,

"Meet you?" she asked, lifting her frightened eyes.

"I have something particular to say to you—very particular."

"Can't you come to the house? Can't you say it there?"

Townsend shook his head gloomily. "I can't enter your doors again!"

"Oh, Mr. Townsend!" murmured Catherine. She trembled as she wondered what had happened, whether her father had forbidden it.

"I can't, in self-respect," said the young man. "Your father has insulted me."

"Insulted you?"

"He has taunted me with my poverty."

"Oh, you are mistaken—you misunderstood him!" Catherine spoke with energy, getting up from her chair.

"Perhaps I am too proud—too sensitive. But would you have me otherwise?" he asked, tenderly.

"Where my father is concerned, you must not be sure. He is full of goodness," said Catherine.

"He laughed at me for having no position! I took it quietly; but only because he belongs to you."

"I don't know," said Catherine; "I don't know what he thinks. I am sure he means to be kind. You must not be too proud."

"I will be proud only of you," Morris answered. "Will you meet me in the Square in the afternoon?"

A great blush on Catherine's part had been the answer to the declaration I have just quoted. She turned away, heedless of his question.

"Will you meet me?" he repeated. "It is very quiet there; no one need see us—towards dusk?"

"It is you who are unkind, it is you who laugh, when you say such things as that."

"My dear girl!" the young man murmured.

"You know how little there is in me to be proud of. I am ugly and stupid."

Morris greeted this remark with an ardent murmur, in which she recognised nothing articulate but an assurance that she was his own dearest.

But she went on. "I am not even—I am not even—" And she paused a moment.

"You are not what?"

"I am not even brave."

"Ah, then, if you are afraid, what shall we do?"

She hesitated awhile; then at last—"You must come to the house," she said; "I am not afraid of that."

"I would rather it were in the Square," the young man urged. "You know how empty it is, often. No one will see us."

"I don't care who sees us! But leave me now."

He left her resignedly; he had got what he wanted. Fortunately

he was ignorant that half an hour later, going home with her father and feeling him near, the poor girl, in spite of her sudden declaration of courage, began to tremble again. Her father said nothing; but she had an idea his eyes were fixed upon her in the darkness. Mrs. Penniman also was silent; Morris Townsend had told her that her niece preferred, unromantically, an interview in a chintz-covered parlour to a sentimental tryst beside a fountain sheeted with dead leaves, and she was lost in wonderment at the oddity—almost the perversity—of the choice.

## X.

Catherine received the young man the next day on the ground she had chosen—amid the chaste upholstery of a New York drawing-room furnished in the fashion of fifty years ago. Morris had swallowed his pride and made the effort necessary to cross the threshold of her too derisive parent—an act of magnanimity which could not fail to render him doubly interesting.

"We must settle something—we must take a line," he declared, passing his hand through his hair and giving a glance at the long narrow mirror which adorned the space between the two windows, and which had at its base a little gilded bracket covered by a thin slab of white marble, supporting in its turn a backgammon board folded together in the shape of two volumes, two shining folios inscribed in greenish gilt letters, *History of England*. If Morris had been pleased to describe the master of the house as a heartless scoffer, it is because he thought him too much on his guard, and this was the easiest way to express his own dissatisfaction—a dissatisfaction which he had made a point of concealing from the Doctor. It will probably seem to the reader, however, that the Doctor's vigilance was by no means excessive and that these two young people had an open field. Their intimacy was now considerable, and it may appear that for a shrinking and retiring person our heroine had been liberal of her favours. The young man, within a few days, had made her listen to things for which she had not supposed that she was prepared; having a lively foreboding of difficulties, he proceeded to gain as much ground as possible in the present. He remembered that fortune favours the brave, and even if he had forgotten it, Mrs. Penniman would have remembered it for him. Mrs. Penniman delighted of all things in a drama, and she flattered herself that a drama would now be enacted. Combining as she did the zeal of the prompter with the impatience of the spectator, she had long since done her utmost to pull up the curtain. She, too, expected to figure in the performance—to be the confidant, the Chorus, to speak the epilogue. It may even be said that there were times when she lost sight altogether of the modest heroine of the play, in the contemplation of certain great scenes which would naturally occur between the hero and herself.

What Morris had told Catherine at last was simply that he loved her, or rather adored her. Virtually, he had made known as much already—his visits had been a series of eloquent intimations of it. But now he had affirmed it in lover's vows, and, as a memorable sign of it, he had passed his arm round the girl's waist and taken a kiss. This happy certitude had come sooner than Catherine expected, and she had regarded it, very naturally, as a priceless treasure. It may even be doubted whether she had ever definitely expected to possess it ; she had not been waiting for it, and she had never said to herself that at a given moment it must come. As I have tried to explain, she was not eager and exacting ; she took what was given her from day to day ; and if the delightful custom of her lover's visits, which yielded her a happiness in which confidence and timidity were strangely blended, had suddenly come to an end, she would not only not have spoken of herself as one of the forsaken, but she would not have thought of herself as one of the disappointed. After Morris had kissed her, the last time he was with her, as a ripe assurance of his devotion, she begged him to go away, to leave her alone, to let her think. Morris went away, taking another kiss first. But Catherine's meditations had lacked a certain coherence. She felt his kisses on her lips and on her cheeks for a long time afterwards ; the sensation was rather an obstacle than an aid to reflection. She would have liked to see her situation all clearly before her, to make up her mind what she should do if, as she feared, her father should tell her that he disapproved of Morris Townsend. But all that she could see with any vividness was that it was terribly strange that any one should disapprove of him ; that there must in that case be some mistake, some mystery, which in a little while would be set at rest. She put off deciding and choosing ; before the vision of a conflict with her father she dropped her eyes and sat motionless, holding her breath and waiting. It made her heart beat, it was intensely painful. When Morris kissed her and said these things—that also made her heart beat ; but this was worse, and it frightened her. Nevertheless, to-day, when the young man spoke of settling something, taking a line, she felt that it was the truth, and she answered very simply and without hesitating.

"We must do our duty," she said ; "we must speak to my father. I will do it to-night ; you must do it to-morrow."

"It is very good of you to do it first," Morris answered. "The young man—the happy lover—generally does that. But just as you please !"

It pleased Catherine to think that she should be brave for his sake, and in her satisfaction she even gave a little smile. "Women have more tact," she said ; "they ought to do it first. They are more conciliating ; they can persuade better."

"You will need all your powers of persuasion. But after all," Morris added, "you are irresistible."

"Please don't speak that way—and promise me this. To-morrow, when you talk with father, you will be very gentle and respectful."

"As much so as possible," Morris promised. "It won't be much use, but I shall try. I certainly would rather have you easily than have to fight for you."

"Don't talk about fighting; we shall not fight."

"Ah, we must be prepared," Morris rejoined; "you especially, because for you it must come hardest. Do you know the first thing your father will say to you?"

"No, Morris; please tell me."

"He will tell you I am mercenary."

"Mercenary!"

"It's a big word; but it means a low thing. It means that I am after your money."

"Oh!" murmured Catherine, softly.

The exclamation was so deprecating and touching that Morris indulged in another little demonstration of affection. "But he will be sure to say it," he added.

"It will be easy to be prepared for that," Catherine said. "I shall simply say that he is mistaken—that other men may be that way, but that you are not."

"You must make a great point of that, for it will be his own great point."

Catherine looked at her lover a minute, and then she said, "I shall persuade him. But I am glad we shall be rich," she added.

Morris turned away, looking into the crown of his hat. "No, it's a misfortune," he said at last. "It is from that our difficulty will come."

"Well, if it is the worst misfortune, we are not so unhappy. Many people would not think it so bad. I will persuade him, and after that we shall be very glad we have money."

Morris Townsend listened to this robust logic in silence. "I will leave my defence to you; it's a charge that a man has to stoop to defend himself from."

Catherine on her side was silent for a while; she was looking at him while he looked, with a good deal of fixedness, out of the window. "Morris," she said, abruptly, "are you very sure you love me?"

He turned round, and in a moment he was bending over her. "My own dearest, can you doubt it?"

"I have only known it five days," she said; "but now it seems to me as if I could never do without it."

"You will never be called upon to try!" And he gave a little tender, reassuring laugh. Then, in a moment, he added, "There is something you must tell me, too." She had closed her eyes after the last words she uttered, and kept them closed; and at this she nodded her head, without opening them. "You must tell me," he went on, "that if your father is dead against me, if he absolutely forbids our marriage, you will still be faithful."

Catherine opened her eyes, gazing at him, and she could give no better promise than what he read there.

"You will cleave to me?" said Morris. "You know you are your own mistress—you are of age."

"Ah, Morris!" she murmured, for all answer. Or rather not for all; for she put her hand into his own. He kept it awhile, and presently he kissed her again. This is all that need be recorded of their conversation; but Mrs. Penniman, if she had been present, would probably have admitted that it was as well it had not taken place beside the fountain in Washington Square.

#### XI.

Catherine listened for her father when he came in that evening, and she heard him go to his study. She sat quiet, though her heart was beating fast, for nearly half an hour; then she went and knocked at his door—a ceremony without which she never crossed the threshold of this apartment. On entering it now she found him in his chair beside the fire, entertaining himself with a cigar and the evening paper.

"I have something to say to you," she began very gently; and she sat down in the first place that offered.

"I shall be very happy to hear it, my dear," said her father. He waited—waited, looking at her, while she stared, in a long silence, at the fire. He was curious and impatient, for he was sure she was going to speak of Morris Townsend; but he let her take her own time, for he was determined to be very mild.

"I am engaged to be married!" Catherine announced at last, still staring at the fire.

The Doctor was startled; the accomplished fact was more than he had expected. But he betrayed no surprise. "You do right to tell me," he simply said. "And who is the happy mortal whom you have honoured with your choice?"

"Mr. Morris Townsend." And as she pronounced her lover's name, Catherine looked at him. What she saw was her father's still grey eye and his clear-cut, definite smile. She contemplated these objects for a moment, and then she looked back at the fire; it was much warmer.

"When was this arrangement made?" the Doctor asked.

"This afternoon—two hours ago."

"Was Mr. Townsend here?"

"Yes, father; in the front parlour." She was very glad that she was not obliged to tell him that the ceremony of their betrothal had taken place out there under the bare alanthus trees.

"Is it serious?" said the Doctor.

"Very serious, father."

Her father was silent a moment. "Mr. Townsend ought to have told me."

"He means to tell you to-morrow."

"After I know all about it from you? He ought to have told me before. Does he think I didn't care—because I left you so much liberty?"

"Oh, no," said Catherine; "he knew you would care. And we have been so much obliged to you for—for the liberty."

The Doctor gave a short laugh. "You might have made a better use of it, Catherine."

"Please don't say that, father," the girl urged, softly, fixing her dull and gentle eyes upon him.

He puffed his cigar awhile, meditatively. "You have gone very fast," he said at last.

"Yes," Catherine answered simply; "I think we have."

Her father glanced at her an instant, removing his eyes from the fire. "I don't wonder Mr. Townsend likes you. You are so simple and so good."

"I don't know why it is—but he *does* like me. I am sure of that."

"And are you very fond of Mr. Townsend?"

"I like him very much, of course—or I shouldn't consent to marry him."

"But you have known him a very short time, my dear."

"Oh," said Catherine, with some eagerness, "it doesn't take long to like a person—when once you begin."

"You must have begun very quickly. Was it the first time you saw him—that night at your aunt's party?"

"I don't know, father," the girl answered. "I can't tell you about that."

"Of course; that's your own affair. You will have observed that I have acted on that principle. I have not interfered, I have left you your liberty, I have remembered that you are no longer a little girl—that you have arrived at years of discretion."

"I feel very old—and very wise," said Catherine, smiling faintly.

"I am afraid that before long you will feel older and wiser yet. I don't like your engagement."

"Ah!" Catherine exclaimed, softly, getting up from her chair.

"No, my dear. I am sorry to give you pain; but I don't like it. You should have consulted me before you settled it. I have been too easy with you, and I feel as if you had taken advantage of my indulgence. Most decidedly, you should have spoken to me first."

Catherine hesitated a moment, and then—"It was because I was afraid you wouldn't like it!" she confessed.

"Ah, there it is! You had a bad conscience."

"No, I have not a bad conscience, father!" the girl cried out, with considerable energy. "Please don't accuse me of anything so dreadful." These words, in fact, represented to her imagination something very terrible indeed, something base and cruel, which she associated with

malefactors and prisoners. "It was because I was afraid—afraid—" she went on.

"If you were afraid, it was because you had been foolish!"

"I was afraid you didn't like Mr. Townsend."

"You were quite right. I don't like him."

"Dear father, you don't know him," said Catherine, in a voice so timidly argumentative that it might have touched him.

"Very true; I don't know him intimately. But I know him enough. I have my impression of him. You don't know him either."

She stood before the fire, with her hands lightly clasped in front of her; and her father, leaning back in his chair and looking up at her, made this remark with a placidity that might have been irritating.

I doubt, however, whether Catherine was irritated, though she broke into a vehement protest. "I don't know him!" she cried. "Why, I know him—better than I have ever known any one!"

"You know a part of him—what he has chosen to show you. But you don't know the rest."

"The rest? What is the rest?"

"Whatever it may be. There is sure to be plenty of it."

"I know what you mean," said Catherine, remembering how Morris had forewarned her. "You mean that he is mercenary."

Her father looked up at her still, with his cold, quiet, reasonable eye, "If I meant it, my dear, I should say it! But there is an error I wish particularly to avoid—that of rendering Mr. Townsend more interesting to you by saying hard things about him."

"I won't think them hard, if they are true," said Catherine.

"If you don't, you will be a remarkably sensible young woman!"

"They will be your reasons, at any rate, and you will want me to hear your reasons."

The Doctor smiled a little. "Very true. You have a perfect right to ask for them." And he puffed his cigar a few moments. "Very well, then, without accusing Mr. Townsend of being in love only with your fortune—and with the fortune that you justly expect—I will say that there is every reason to suppose that these good things have entered into his calculation more largely than a tender solicitude for your happiness strictly requires. There is of course nothing impossible in an intelligent young man entertaining a disinterested affection for you. You are an honest, amiable girl, and an intelligent young man might easily find it out. But the principal thing that we know about this young man—who is, indeed, very intelligent—leads us to suppose that, however much he may value your personal merits, he values your money more. The principal thing we know about him is that he has led a life of dissipation, and has spent a fortune of his own in doing so. That is enough for me, my dear. I wish you to marry a young man with other antecedents—a young man who could give positive guarantees. If Morris

Townsend has spent his own fortune in amusing himself, there is every reason to believe that he would spend yours."

The Doctor delivered himself of these remarks slowly, deliberately, with occasional pauses and prolongations of accent, which made no great allowance for poor Catherine's suspense as to his conclusion. She sat down at last, with her head bent and her eyes still fixed upon him; and strangely enough—I hardly know how to tell it—even while she felt that what he said went so terribly against her, she admired his neatness and nobleness of expression. There was something hopeless and oppressive in having to argue with her father; but she too, on her side, must try to be clear. He was so quiet; he was not at all angry; and she, too, must be quiet. But her very effort to be quiet made her tremble.

"That is not the principal thing we know about him," she said; and there was a touch of her tremor in her voice. "There are other things—many other things. He has very high abilities—he wants so much to do something. He is kind, and generous, and true," said poor Catherine, who had not suspected hitherto the resources of her eloquence. "And his fortune—his fortune that he spent—was very small!"

"All the more reason he shouldn't have spent it," cried the Doctor getting up with a laugh. Then as Catherine, who had also risen to her feet again, stood there in her rather angular earnestness, wishing so much and expressing so little, he drew her towards him and kissed her. "You won't think me cruel?" he said, holding her a moment.

This question was not reassuring; it seemed to Catherine, on the contrary, to suggest possibilities which made her feel sick. But she answered coherently enough—"No, dear father; because if you knew how I feel—and you must know, you know everything—you would be so kind, so gentle."

"Yes, I think I know how you feel," the Doctor said. "I will be very kind—be sure of that. And I will see Mr. Townsend to-morrow. Meanwhile, and for the present, be so good as to mention to no one that you are engaged."

## XII.

On the morrow, in the afternoon, he stayed at home, awaiting Mr. Townsend's call—a proceeding by which it appeared to him (justly perhaps, for he was a very busy man) that he paid Catherine's suitor great honour and gave both these young people so much the less to complain of. Morris presented himself with a countenance sufficiently serene—he appeared to have forgotten the "insult" for which he had solicited Catherine's sympathy two evenings before, and Dr. Sloper lost no time in letting him know that he had been prepared for his visit.

"Catherine told me yesterday what has been going on between you," he said. "You must allow me to say that it would have been becoming of you to give me notice of your intentions before they had gone so far."

"I should have done so," Morris answered, "if you had not had so much the appearance of leaving your daughter at liberty. She seems to me quite her own mistress."

"Literally, she is. But she has not emancipated herself morally quite so far, I trust, as to choose a husband without consulting me. I have left her at liberty, but I have not been in the least indifferent. The truth is that your little affair has come to a head with a rapidity that surprises me. It was only the other day that Catherine made your acquaintance."

"It was not long ago, certainly," said Morris, with great gravity. "I admit that we have not been slow to—to arrive at an understanding. But that was very natural, from the moment we were sure of ourselves—and of each other. My interest in Miss Sloper began the first time I saw her."

"Did it not by chance precede your first meeting?" the Doctor asked. Morris looked at him an instant. "I certainly had already heard that she was a charming girl."

"A charming girl—that's what you think her?"

"Assuredly. Otherwise I should not be sitting here."

The Doctor meditated a moment. "My dear young man," he said at last, "you must be very susceptible. As Catherine's father, I have, I trust, a just and tender appreciation of her many good qualities; but I don't mind telling you that I have never thought of her as a charming girl and never expected any one else to do so."

Morris Townsend received this statement with a smile that was not wholly devoid of deference. "I don't know what I might think of her if I were her father. I can't put myself in that place. I speak from my own point of view."

"You speak very well," said the Doctor; "but that is not all that is necessary. I told Catherine yesterday that I disapproved of her engagement."

"She let me know as much, and I was very sorry to hear it. I am greatly disappointed." And Morris sat in silence awhile, looking at the floor.

"Did you really expect I would say I was delighted, and throw my daughter into your arms?"

"Oh, no; I had an idea you didn't like me."

"What gave you the idea?"

"The fact that I am poor."

"That has a harsh sound," said the Doctor, "but it is about the truth—speaking of you strictly as a son-in-law. Your absence of means, of a profession, of visible resources or prospects, places you in a category from which it would be imprudent for me to select a husband for my daughter, who is a weak young woman with a large fortune. In any other capacity I am perfectly prepared to like you. As a son-in-law, I abominate you!"

Morris Townsend listened respectfully. "I don't think Miss Sloper is a weak woman," he presently said.

"Of course you must defend her—it's the least you can do. But I have known my child twenty years, and you have known her six weeks. Even if she were not weak, however, you would still be a penniless man."

"Ah, yes; that is *my* weakness! And therefore, you mean, I am mercenary—I only want your daughter's money."

"I don't say that. I am not obliged to say it; and to say it, save under stress of compulsion, would be very bad taste. I say simply that you belong to the wrong category."

"But your daughter doesn't marry a category," Townsend urged, with his handsome smile. "She marries an individual—an individual whom she is so good as to say she loves."

"An individual who offers so little in return!"

"Is it possible to offer more than the most tender affection and a life-long devotion?" the young man demanded.

"It depends how we take it. It is possible to offer a few other things besides, and not only it is possible, but it is the custom. A life-long devotion is measured after the fact; and meanwhile it is usual in these cases to give a few material securities. What are yours? A very handsome face and figure, and a very good manner. They are excellent as far as they go, but they don't go far enough."

"There is one thing you should add to them," said Morris: "the word of a gentleman!"

"The word of a gentleman that you will always love Catherine! You must be a very fine gentleman to be sure of that."

"The word of a gentleman that I am not mercenary; that my affection for Miss Sloper is as pure and disinterested a sentiment as was ever lodged in a human breast! I care no more for her fortune than for the ashes in that grate."

"I take note—I take note," said the Doctor. "But, having done so, I turn to our category again. Even with that solemn vow on your lips, you take your place in it. There is nothing against you but an accident, if you will; but with my thirty years' medical practice, I have seen that accidents may have far-reaching consequences."

Morris smoothed his hat—it was already remarkably glossy—and continued to display a self-control which, as the Doctor was obliged to admit, was extremely creditable to him. But his disappointment was evidently keen.

"Is there nothing I can do to make you believe in me?"

"If there were, I should be sorry to suggest it, for—don't you see?—I don't want to believe in you!" said the Doctor, smiling.

"I would go and dig in the fields."

"That would be foolish."

"I will take the first work that offers, to-morrow."

"Do so by all means—but for your own sake, not for mine."

"I see; you think I am an idler!" Morris exclaimed, a little too much in the tone of a man who has made a discovery. But he saw his error immediately and blushed.

"It doesn't matter what I think, when once I have told you I don't think of you as a son-in-law."

But Morris persisted. "You think I would squander her money?"

The Doctor smiled. "It doesn't matter, as I say; but I plead guilty to that."

"That's because I spent my own, I suppose," said Morris. "I frankly confess that. I have been wild. I have been foolish. I will tell you every crazy thing I ever did, if you like. There were some great follies among the number—I have never concealed that. But I have sown my wild oats. Isn't there some proverb about a reformed rake? I was not a rake, but I assure you I have reformed. It is better to have amused oneself for a while and have done with it. Your daughter would never care for a milksop; and I will take the liberty of saying that you would like one quite as little. Besides, between my money and hers there is a great difference. I spent my own; it was because it was my own that I spent it. And I made no debts; when it was gone I stopped. I don't owe a penny in the world."

"Allow me to inquire what you are living on now—though I admit," the Doctor added, "that the question, on my part, is inconsistent."

"I am living on the remnants of my property," said Morris Townsend.

"Thank you!" the Doctor gravely replied.

Yes, certainly, Morris's self-control was laudable. "Even admitting I attach an undue importance to Miss Sloper's fortune," he went on, "would not that be in itself an assurance that I would take good care of it?"

"That you should take too much care would be quite as bad as that you should take too little. Catherine might suffer as much by your economy as by your extravagance."

"I think you are very unjust!" The young man made this declaration decently, civilly, without violence.

"It is your privilege to think so, and I surrender my reputation to you! I certainly don't flatter myself I gratify you."

"Don't you care a little to gratify your daughter? Do you enjoy the idea of making her miserable?"

"I am perfectly resigned to her thinking me a tyrant for a twelve-month."

"For a twelvemonth!" exclaimed Morris, with a laugh.

"For a lifetime, then! She may as well be miserable in that way as in the other."

Here at last Morris lost his temper. "Ah, you are not polite, sir!" he cried.

" You push me to it—you argue too much."

" I have a great deal at stake."

" Well, whatever it is," said the Doctor, " you have lost it ! "

" Are you sure of that ? " asked Morris ; " are you sure your daughter will give me up ? "

" I mean, of course, you have lost it as far as I am concerned. As for Catherine's giving you up—no, I am not sure of it. But as I shall strongly recommend it, as I have a great fund of respect and affection in my daughter's mind to draw upon, and as she has the sentiment of duty developed in a very high degree, I think it extremely possible."

Morris Townsend began to smooth his hat again. " I, too, have a fund of affection to draw upon ! " he observed at last.

The Doctor at this point showed his own first symptoms of irritation. " Do you mean to defy me ? "

" Call it what you please, sir ! I mean not to give your daughter up."

The Doctor shook his head. " I haven't the least fear of your pining away your life. You are made to enjoy it."

Morris gave a laugh. " Your opposition to my marriage is all the more cruel, then ! Do you intend to forbid your daughter to see me again ? "

" She is past the age at which people are forbidden, and I am not a father in an old-fashioned novel. But I shall strongly urge her to break with you."

" I don't think she will," said Morris Townsend.

" Perhaps not. But I shall have done what I could."

" She has gone too far," Morris went on.

" To retreat ? Then let her stop where she is."

" Too far to stop, I mean."

The Doctor looked at him a moment ; Morris had his hand on the door. " There is a great deal of impertinence in your saying it."

" I will say no more, sir ! " Morris answered ; and, making his bow, he left the room.

HENRY JAMES, JR.

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